We Miss You

SARAH’S TOP
MAJORCA BEACHES

MAJORCA HAS EVERYTHING UNDER
THE SUN. DON’T FORGET US ON
THIS WONDERFUL ISLAND.
Alcudia’s beaches: “Everyone’s safety is our pledge”

Well before it was possible to reopen beaches in Majorca, Alcudia town hall had set up a contingency management committee for the municipalities’ beaches. The town hall was proactive in establishing a contingency plan and protocols to ensure everyone’s safety - that of beachgoers and employees.

The plan covers four key areas: beach capacity control; cleaning and disinfection; preventive measures for the hiring of beach services; and preventive measures for lifeguards and accessibility services.

Beach capacity control protocol

The maximum number of people allowed on each beach has been calculated based on the area available for people to lie on beaches and the minimum distances between people which are needed in order to ensure beachgoer safety. The main beaches are those in Puerto Alcudia. These are divided into two sectors, with Sector One having the much greater capacity (21,280 people) and Sector Two 6,800 people. Limits also apply to the smaller beaches - Alcudia (2,490); S’Illot (235); Sant Joan (188); Sant Pere (235); Morer Vermell (332); Sa Marina/Corral de’n Bennàssar (550); Cap de Bou (96).

Alcudia police, sunlounger monitors and lifeguards are all involved in ensuring that these limits are observed. The police will close beaches where the maximum capacity is reached, and notices to this effect will be placed at entrance points to beaches. Information on this can be found via the town hall’s website (www.alcudia.net) and the town hall’s tourism website (www.alcudia-mallorca.com).

Cleaning and disinfection schedules

On the two main beaches, there is a daily procedure between 6am and 10am. This involves manual cleaning of the beaches; the sifting of sand in sequential order by area; the use of authorised virucidal products to disinfect entrances, promenades, waste bins, benches, notices and other features. The toilets are open between 10am and 6pm and are cleaned and disinfected every two hours. For the other beaches, there is early morning cleaning - by hand - every day and disinfection of entrances and waste bins, etc. Sunloungers and parasols for hire are disinfected every day early in the morning, and while they are in service, they are cleaned and disinfected between 10am and 3pm.

First-aid and rescue equipment is disinfected after every use.

Protocols for the hire of beach services

The personnel who monitor the sunloungers and provide watersports have received training in preventive measures. Protocols they follow are: constant handwashing and disinfection; maintaining safe distances; the wearing of masks; the correct use of cleaning and disinfection products; the carrying of disinfectant alcohol solution in personal backpacks; observing procedures for monitoring symptoms. Sunloungers sets are at distances of eight and ten metres apart. Towels must be used, and electronic payment methods are encouraged.

Lifeguard service protocols

The lifeguards have also been given training in preventive measures. Their protocols are similar to those of other personnel, while specific measures are: maintaining safe distance between two lifeguards when they are on watch; using masks, visors and gloves when assisting bathers; and carrying PPE as well as sanitiser solution in personal backpacks.

For accessibility services, there are stringent safety measures. These involve the disinfection of amphibious chairs, crutches, assistance lifts, and the shaded area platform after every use. Assisted bathing appointments can be made by calling 971 892 777.

Alcudia’s beaches offer safety, quality, sustainability and accessibility. The town hall has worked in partnership with SostenibleXXI Consulting and the certifying body SGS in establishing the protocols to ensure everyone’s safety.
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On Monday 25 May, Majorca slipped nicely into Phase II of the Government’s elaborate de-escalation plans, and with it came the magical news that we could return to the beach. Having gazed lustfully at the unblemished shores and crystalline waters for the best part of six weeks, groups of up to 15 were at long last allowed to feel the sand between their toes and the salt up their nose - of course following those strict rules of hygiene and distancing to which we’ve (sort of) become accustomed.

Social media was awash with delight. Never had the residents of Majorca seen the water so clear, the sand so clean, the sea life so abundant. And, with tourists still several weeks away, they had it all to themselves - kind of a big deal for an island of only a million residents that is annually inundated by 14 million more human beings. But, now it’s safe to do so, the tourists are flocking back, and they too can enjoy some of the most incredible beaches in the world.

Playa Formentor

Almost as far north as you can get, Playa Formentor is a clean, tree-backed stretch of paradise, marred only by the cost of parking in high season. Shallow water, child-friendly, and served by the usual facilities of sunloungers and showers, the beach also offers various watersports gear for rent. If you want to add some extra zing to the day, arrive by ferry from Puerto Pollensa (around half an hour) and enjoy lunch at one of the small handful of seafront eateries. Its landmark hotel, the Formentor, a Royal Hideaway, dating back as far as 1929, is confirmed to change hands in December 2020 and a brand new luxury brand will take over for June 2021.
Head east, past the bustling town of Alcudia, and you’ll find the postcard-perfect neighbouring beaches of Playa de Muro and Can Picafort. Wide fine sand, vibrant turquoise water, and plenty of space for everyone – all protected by undulating sand dunes. As the sea tends to be very calm, and runs shallow for quite a distance, this coastline is very popular with families. However, on a windy day it can get choppy and currents are occasionally strong – take note of the flag at the lifeguard station.

Foodies will be happy to know that this area also has its pick of feet-in-sand restaurants, including the highly-rated Ponderosa Beach, Can Gavella and Royal Beach Gastro-senses. If you happen to find Playa de Muro and Can Picafort a little too touristy, head ten minutes further east to the more laid-back resort of Son Serra de Marina.

Cala Torta and Cala Mesquida

At the northeast tip of Majorca, these two calas are relatively inaccessible from Palma (well over an hour by car) and are therefore comparatively less mobbed than the beaches of the southwest. Both have a wilderness vibe about them, Cala Torta in particular, and attract plenty of folk who prefer to feel the air on their bare bits without the restriction of swimwear – you have been warned. On the subject of warnings, the last stretch of road to Cala Torta isn’t so kind to low-slung sports cars, while the onshore waves and currents can be especially tricky at Cala Mesquida. But, don’t be put off; the rugged natural landscape of sand dunes and pine trees is stunning, and full of wildlife, and each beach has a little snack bar for a refreshing G&T.
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**Sa Coma**

- Moving down the east coast, the resort of Sa Coma definitely merits a mention. Set between the arguably less attractive Cala Millor to the north and the tranquil fishing town of Porto Cristo to the south (this is where Rafa Nadal lives), Sa Coma is a very pleasant stretch of Blue Flag beach backed by a promenade with shady palm trees and a selection of friendly bars. The water is clean, gently shelving, and safe for children.

**Cala Mondragó**

- Edging further south, we find a trio of ‘wow factor’ beaches within the Mondragó Natural Park: Cala Mondragó (also known as Caló de sa Font de’n’Alis), S’Amarador, and Caló Des Burgit. Given protected status in 1992, this truly unspoiled reserve is blessed with wetland, pine forest and nature trails, alongside aquamarine sea and white sand that will render you speechless. The first-mentioned beach is the most accessible, and therefore can be the most crowded, but comes complete with bar and restaurant for light refreshment. S’Amarador is reached easily from here on foot, while Caló Des Burgit is the furthest and least crowded – worth the extra effort. In all cases, bring a snorkel and a good book.

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**Factbox: Cala Pi**

- Length of the beach: 45 metres
- Type of access: For pedestrians, vehicles and boats
- Average width: 140 metres
- Access for disabled: No
- Degree of occupancy: Medium
- Anchoring zone: Yes

**Factbox: Sa Coma**

- Length of the beach: 800 metres
- Type of access: For pedestrians, vehicles and boats
- Average width: 30 metres
- Access for disabled: Yes
- Degree of occupancy: High
- Anchoring zone: Yes

**Factbox: Cala Mondragó**

- Length of the beach: 75 metres
- Type of access: For pedestrians, vehicles and boats
- Average width: 60 metres
- Access for disabled: Yes
- Degree of occupancy: High
- Anchoring zone: Yes

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**Calas Pi**

- Reached by descending a hundred or so concrete steps, Cala Pi (Pi meaning pine) is an exceedingly attractive cove in the municipality of Llucmajor. Protected by cliffs on either side, it has golden sand, turquoise water, lush vegetation, and a run of green-shuttered boathouses which serve to heighten the cove’s photogenicity. There’s only a small beach bar, but the eponymous local village has a selection of restaurants and shops.

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**Photo: The Aviation Centre**

**Sa Coma beach. PHOTO: MDB FILES**

**Photo: MDB FILES**

**Cala Pi. PHOTO: MDB FILES**

**Photo: MDB FILES**

**Cala Pi. PHOTO: MDB FILES**

**Photo: MDB FILES**

**Photo: MDB FILES**

**Photo: MDB FILES**

**Photo: MDB FILES**
MAJORCA'S BEST KEPT SECRET - BEACH GUIDE

Cala Llombards, Caló des Moro and Cala S’Almunia

Local residents would rather we kept these particular beaches secret - it’s not hard to understand why. Cala Llombards is a smart second-home community with a long narrow white sand cove tucked between cliffs. These cliffs offer a great vantage point for leaping into the clear waters, which people often do. Meanwhile, the municipality’s most distinctive monument, Es Pontàs, a formidable bridge-shaped rock, is at the entrance to Cala Llombards and best viewed from the appropriately named Mirador Es Pontàs. If you’re an energetic type, a half-hour walk is all that’s required to reach the next beach, Caló des Moro. It’s a shame the secret is out because, on the one hand, this paradisiacal beach is about as jaw-droppingly gorgeous as you can get, while on the other it can get rather crowded on a summer weekend. Be careful as you descend the steep makeshift steps to the shore. Literally a couple of minutes’ walk brings you to Cala S’Almunia, a rather smaller, less crowded and, sadly, less sandy affair, but the water is incredibly inviting. Beware – there are more steep stairs to navigate.

FACTBOX

**Cala Llombards**
- Length of the beach: 55 metres
- Type of access: For pedestrians, vehicles and boats
- Average width: 150 metres
- Access for disabled: No
- Degree of occupancy: High
- Anchoring zone: Yes

**Caló des Moro**
- Length of the beach: 30 metres
- Type of access: For pedestrians
- Average width: 20 metres
- Access for disabled: No
- Degree of occupancy: Low
- Anchoring zone: No

**Cala S’Almunia**
- Length of the beach: 30 metres
- Type of access: For pedestrians
- Average width: 10 metres
- Access for disabled: No
- Degree of occupancy: Low
- Anchoring zone: No
Es Carbó, Es Trenc and Ses Covetes

A golden triumvirate of beaches, Es Carbó, Es Trenc and Ses Covetes feature one after the other on the southernmost tip of the island. Accessed by a two kilometre walk from Colonia St Jordi. Es Carbó is a fairly remote white sand beach backed by wild dunes. With very little going on – no sunloungers, no shade, no beach bar, no toilets, no watersports – it attracts a largely child-free clientele who just want peace, quiet and pristine waters. In contrast, Es Trenc is anything but peaceful in peak season, but it’s oft touted as the most beautiful beach on the island. Also fringed with a protected dune system, this two kilometre long stretch of powder-white sand is lapped by shallow Caribbean-esque cyan water dotted with yachts at anchor. Part of a national park, there are no big hotels to spoil the scene, just a sprinkling of chiringuito eateries. If you’re offended by costly car parking or a generous number of nudists, give Es Trenc a miss. Neighbouring Ses Covetes offers more of the same, including another beach eatery, with the added interest of two disused military bunkers fancifully painted with inspirational quotes.

Cala Deya

The west coast of Majorca is rather less known for its beaches, on account of it being dominated by the UNESCO-protected Serra de Tramuntana mountain range that drops straight into the sea. There are merely a smattering of dainty calas and coves, plus a more generous sandy sweep at Puerto Soller. Cala Deya is one of the daintiest, stretching just 70 metres wide. Characterised by shingle and rock pools, and with no sunloungers or umbrellas on offer, it could not really be described as family-friendly – but that doesn’t stop it being a hit with locals and tourists alike. A big chunk of Cala Deya’s appeal are the two seafood restaurants, one of which, Ca’s Patro March, was used as a location for scenes in multi-award-winning TV series The Night Manager.
Some of the social, economic and environmental challenges of the 21st century will be the issues that the students of today will have to deal with. Climate change, migration, equality, sustainability, data protection, plastic pollution, demand for water-energy-food, and an ageing population are examples of areas which will need consideration. In this evolving global society, inquiry, critical thinking, and international mindedness are essential skill sets that students must have to determine their future success.

Today’s school children will be tomorrow’s leaders, and they need to develop the tools now so that they can be strong thinkers, planners and activists.

At The Academy International School we recognise the importance of educating for the future. Our teaching and learning from our Early Years right through to secondary is to inspire learners to be prepared for whatever challenges lie ahead. Our youngest students develop skills of negotiation and sharing and learn through play and practical activities. Throughout primary the children have cross curricular learning opportunities, work in groups, problem solve and have creative project work. In secondary the students work alongside Save the Med on plastic pollution projects and beach studies, take part in debate competitions, support local and international charities, and have links with schools on the island and in other countries. Our oldest students have represented the Balearic Islands in the Spanish National European Youth Parliament forming part of committees to discuss genuine issues facing Europe. Academy students see how our school connects with the world at large through community projects and activities locally, nationally, and internationally.

We are the only International British School in Majorca that offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). The programme complements our curriculum from Nursery to Year 11 and provides the students with a qualification that is widely recognized by the world’s leading universities. The IBDP offers students multiple ways to develop and demonstrate what they know and understand. Students complete collaborative projects, oral presentations, essay writing, inquiry-based experiments, and take part in discussion and debate that mirror what they will experience in the challenging fields they hope to enter after university. Inquisitiveness and interpretation are among the key cognitive properties of an IB education. These are skills which we encourage and develop within our students from Nursery all the way to the IBDP.

The Academy is a dynamic centre of learning responding to the changing needs of our students and society. We are the only British KiVa school in Majorca. KiVa is a programme developed in Finland which is embedded into a school to create an environment in which bullying has no place. Our outdoor learning approach combines with our school philosophy to ensure that the children have a well-rounded education. At our primary school we are very lucky to have much outdoor space with a school garden, orchard, paddock for our horses, tennis court, swimming pool and football pitches. On the new secondary school site we have collaborative learning spaces, the latest technology as tools for teaching and learning, state of the art science labs, an outdoor amphitheatre, padel tennis courts, swimming pools and extensive sports facilities.

Our school motto is ‘the joy of learning’, and we have been passionate about bringing the joy of learning to children for over 30 years.

‘EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD.’

Nelson Mandela

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**Sa Calobra**

Despite the fact that it is so tricky to access – 13 kilometres of hairpin bends by road, a pretty treacherous hike through the Torrent de Pareis, or an hour-long boat trip from Puerto Soller – Sa Calobra is one of Majorca’s most beloved beauty spots. The first beach is rather uninspiring, 30 metres of pebbles joined by some eateries and shops, but after following a long walkway carved into the cliffside, you reach the main event, Torrent de Pareis. Breath-takingly beautiful, surrounded by imposing cliffs, this shingle beach offers endless Kodak moments, especially if you hang on for sunset. Just don’t expect to have the beach to yourself, in peak season visitors can be packed like sardines. With 250-plus beaches on offer in Majorca, we could have mentioned hundreds more, but some gems are worth finding out for yourself. Sarah Forge would like to thank The Aviation Centre for supplying a selection of amazing photos.

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**Cala Portals Vells, Cala del Mago, Caló dels Reis**

Often referred to as simply ‘Portals Vells’, this three-fingered bay is arguably the most popular spot to drop your anchor in the southwest. A short cruise from Puerto Portals and Port Adriano, it’s boat soup in high season, with tenders shuttling guests to and from a duo of seafront restaurants. With calm water and fine sand, Cala Portals Vells is by far the most popular of the trio, and it’s advisable to arrive early to find a hole for your car, and your towel. Make sure you explore the large man-made caves at the end of the bay where stone was once extracted to build Palma’s cathedral. Petite Cala del Mago next door is an official nudist beach, with naturists spilling out onto the nearby flat sand-coloured rocks to top up their tans. The least accessible, and therefore the quietest, is Caló dels Reis.
Multi-Hire began life in the 70’s as Maria’s, a hire business offering anything that the visitors to the north of Majorca might need. Mobility scooters and walkers, to help those with limited mobility get the most from their holiday, baby equipment, cots, highchairs, sterilisers, bouncers, listeners, so that parents could relax as well, bikes, fans, air con units and even a metal detector! In 2005, Maria’s merged with Multi Video and became Multi-Hire. From humble beginnings, the business has expanded beyond the walls of the original shop and the bikes have been moved next door to become Pro Am Cycles. Everything from a balance bike to a carbon road bike. “The company slogan is “You need it, we’ve got it”, and apart from a kitchen sink, we’ve got it covered”.

Ian and Samantha up rooted their 6 and 12 year old daughters in 2002, and haven’t looked back since. “Although this year is going to be the most challenging so far, we will bounce back, thanks to the trust we have built up between our loyal customers, the holiday companies we work with and local businesses. On top of that, we have a fantastic website, which is so easy to use”.

Although we are in one of the safest parts of Spain with regards to the Coronavirus, for the safety of our clients and staff, all of our stock has been sanitised using Sanytol products, and is thoroughly cleaned following every hire. We have a one door in and one door out system in the hire shop, face masks must be worn, a 2m distance must be maintained between clients and there is a hand sanitiser at the door.

We hope that the tourist industry will begin to get back to a more normal level, but not at the sacrifice of safe practice. Saying that, we would be lying if we said we hadn’t enjoyed having the beaches to ourselves for part of this year, testing out our bikes and paddle boards has been a rare treat for us, but we do miss you, come back soon and above all else, stay safe and stay healthy!

“You need it, we’ve got it”

We hope that the tourist industry will begin to get back to a more normal level, but not at the sacrifice of safe practice.
Majorca's first airport with horse and cart ground-handling

This photo was taken circa 1954 when Palma’s Son Bonet Airport (now used for private jets and helicopters) was the island’s main airport. Using a horse and cart, passenger luggage could be transported from the hanger terminal and loaded onto the aircraft. In 1959, passenger operations moved to the existing Son Sant Juan Airport.

First English newspaper in Spain

The very first newspaper in English to be published in Spain was the Majorca Daily Bulletin in 1962. The founding director, Pedro Serra, wanted to communicate directly with English-speaking visitors and residents providing them with a combination of Spanish national and local news, culture and events together with breaking news from the UK. One of the paper’s first contributors was the late British poet and author, Robert Graves, who wrote “I Claudius” from his idyllic village house in Deya.

Sensation! The first bikini seen in Spain in Majorca!

Prior to 1962 nothing as daring as a bikini had ever been featured in a Spanish film let alone been seen in public. The “Bahía de Palma” film, which was shot all over the island, featured the German actress, Elke Sommer, who posed in the infamous bikini on a Palma beach as a publicity stunt to promote the film. To the surprise of the film’s director, the Spanish Authorities did not oppose the censorship of the film even though women were prohibited from wearing two pieces in Spain at the time. The publicity stunt caused a sensation and the film was an international success.

“First Millionth Visitor Celebration”

In 1964 the Mallorca Tourist Board decided to celebrate its one millionth tourist visitor, who happened to be British. In conjunction with Palma Airport, they decided to contact the pilot of a British European Airways flight from Manchester to alert the crew and to ensure that the one millionth passengers (a couple from Manchester) would be greeted by a band, local dancers and dignitaries when the plane landed at Palma.

When the aircraft doors opened, instead of the designated couple, a typical English “lady” descended smiling and waving at the welcoming committee. The chief of the Tourist Board had the embarrassing task of telling her that this was not being laid on for her benefit but for the couple behind her. The “lady” replied; “Forgive my error, I thought all this was because I have written so much about the island. By the way, my name is Agatha Christie”. The Tourist Board chief couldn’t believe he had missed such a great promotional opportunity. The author first visited Majorca in 1932 when she discovered the north of the island and loved Port Pollensa where she later returned. The area was also her inspiration for the murder mystery entitled “Problem at Pollensa Bay”.

Concorde lands for the first time in Majorca

In 1983 to mark Concorde’s 31st anniversary of flying, British Airways organised a special “Concorde Mallorca” flight from Manchester Airport which took off on October 22nd, 1983 and landed at Palma to great celebration. However, in order for Concorde to break the sound barrier and achieve a speed of over mach 2, the aircraft had to make a detour over the Atlantic and then head towards Palma. For this reason the total flight time was two hours.

From horse & cart ground handling to Spain’s first bikini sighting, our special 1 millionth passenger and Concorde… As one of the first Spanish destinations for package holidaymakers in the 1950’s, Majorca has been at the forefront of tourism ever since. It remains the most popular short-haul destination for British holidaymakers (attracting approximately 2.8 million (*UK visitors in 2019. Source: “AENA”). The Mallorca Tourist Board (Fomento del Turismo de Mallorca) was founded in 1905 and is still the longest established tourist association in Spain, with a wealth of records and anecdotes. During the curfews we rummaged through our archives and found some great stories from the early days of tourism on Majorca.

The Fomento del Turismo (known as the Mallorca Tourist Board) was founded in 1905 and is the longest established tourist board in Spain and possibly in the world. https://www.mallorca.com/en/tourism-history-made-in-mallorca/
The Balearics has 54 Blue Flags this summer - 38 for beaches, thirteen for marinas and three for sustainable tourist boats. In Spain as a whole, there will be 688 Blue Flags. These represent an increase of nineteen, there being 23 more beaches and four fewer marinas. Valencia has the most of any region.

Of 662 beaches in Spain which presented applications, 89% (589) were awarded with Blue Flags for this year. Spain maintains its international leadership for the number of Blue Flags, a position the country has held since 1987, which was when the Blue Flags scheme started. After Spain come Greece (514), Turkey (508), France (507), Italy (482) and Portugal (387).

The secretary of state for tourism, Isabel Oliver, said that the Spanish coast maintains high standards of quality that strengthen ever more the image of Spain as a tourism destination leader and as the most competitive tourism country in the world.

Spain’s coast has always been “a strength and a sign of the identity” of Spain as a tourism destination in the same way as the climate and the hospitality. “And today this is once more a reason for pride. Health security is going to be essential this year, when it will not be sufficient that our beaches have easy and safe access and teams of lifeguards. This year we will be offering safety-plus to residents and tourists. Our wish is that this season we will all be able to enjoy the enormous variety of the sun and beach offer in our country and to do so in conditions of maximum safety and well-being.”

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Enjoy your summer evenings dining with us in the South West of Mallorca – scan the qr code to the right to view our menu.
By Bulletin columnist Donald Trelford

My love affair with Majorca and my love affair with my wife ran on parallel lines. After we met in 1997, she was keen for us to go to Majorca, where she had spent most of her childhood holidays in a casita owned by her family.

That visit was a test. If I didn’t like Majorca, I would be out on my neck. But it was love at first sight – for both the island and for Claire.

In 2003 we bought a finca and made our home here.

I remember cycling along the famous Pine Path in Puerto Pollensa on my way to get croissants for breakfast and marveling at the sun, the sand and the sea, with the boats, the mountains and the sky as a stunning backdrop.

I felt a sense of peace, as well as beauty, that has never left me for the past two wonderful decades.

Being in love with Majorca brings to mind so many of those love songs we used to sing like ‘going on a summer holiday’. So going on holiday and falling in love that lasted a lifetime has a great deal to recommend the island for.

After several holidays when I couldn’t stay away I decided to pack up my London home and move to Puerto Pollensa. I made many friends, that I still have now 60 years later but one in particular, after only knowing him three weeks asked if I would marry him. So what more could I want ‘love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage’. But beyond all that is the family of neighbours that embraces us all through thick and thin and our own family unit who are with us always. I would say, if you can’t actually come to live here, come just as frequently as you can, it’s a real love affair.
WHY I LOVE MAJORCA

By Bulletin columnist, fitness writer, consultant and coach Simon Kenion Shears

I’m far too lazy to exercise. Yet, strangely, after a year on this party island, my legs are sore and my belly, trim. Maybe it’s from all the hiking along the winding trails of the Tramuntana, canyoning down the spring waterfalls at Torrent de Connegra or Pareis, cycling through coastal stone villages, or was it just from playing paddle at Palma Racket Club? I can’t be sure, only none of that’s work; it’s leisure. And it couldn’t last forever. Not with my absent self-discipline. I said goodbye to winter with a healthy but heavy heart, convinced that my active lifestyle couldn’t last the summer. Surely, I thought, that too many late nights and cocktails would see the blubber blow up around my waist like a rubber ring. Only, once again, I was wrong. I can’t stay out late if I’m paddleboarding along glassy shores, kayaking into coastal caves, or surfing rolling waves in Son Serra, all at the crack of dawn. The allure of the water makes it easier than I thought to put the glass down. That’s why I love this island; because I love being lazy and Majorca loves me.

By Bulletin columnist, London journalist and leading writer Anna Nicholas

As an invertebrate traveller and writer, there are scores of memorable places around the globe that I would love to revisit but few, if any, where I would wish to spend the rest of my life. Majorca bucked the trend. It is now 20 years since I relocated to the island with my family and we have never had a regret about leaving our erstwhile frantic existence in central London. It was love at first sight when we first ventured to the craggy northwest of Majorca for a well-earned summer break. I had always had reservations about the kind of boisterous holidaymakers that sought the magnet of Magaluf but I had no idea how breathtaking beautiful the island was and how varied the landscape.

In the Soller valley where I live, there is an abundant lemon, orange and olive trees, verdant orchards, a dreamy azure sea, the spectacular Tramuntana mountain range and an ancient, picturesque and lively town steeped in history. It is a wonderfully inspirational place to me to write my travel books and novels about the island and eight books later, it has certainly proven to be my muse. Those who travel here for pleasure and fail to interact with locals, sample the fabulous gastronomy or visit key heritage sites, will miss out. Majorca is an island rich in history, culture, oral traditions and geographical splendour. It is impossible to get bored. There is always somewhere new to explore, a cultural fact to discover and richness of day to day life that is so unique. With its abundance of fiestas across the island throughout the year, a fabulous capital city by the sea, and so many wonders to behold in a landscape of such infinite variety, it surely has to be one of the most desirable destinations to live in the world? Well it certainly is for me, and two decades later, my heart is still smitten.

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For me it is a mixture of quite a lot of things. First of all the bird life - there is an abundance of great species to see including my favourite and the reason I visited in the first place back in 1990 - the Hoo-poe. With other specialities such as the Black Vulture, Purple Gallinule, Spectacled Warbler and Bee Eater it is a birders paradise.

Coupled with this there is some magnificent scenery, from the marshes and coast, to the woodlands and mountains - the latter having UNESCO heritage status. Plants abound on the island and include my favourite group the Orchids.

The people are so friendly and welcome anyone having a go at learning the language. There are restaurants to suit every budget and the local bars are filled with character and charm. The seas are a beautiful azure and jade and warm and inviting. What is there not to love.

Lockdown brought it home to me, when every morning I would wake feeling so utterly blessed to be in Majorca. If the island was to be cut off from the rest of the world, there was nowhere else I would rather be.

I've travelled to many exotic shores, but nowhere brings such a variety of spectacular landscapes within such short distances. Best of all, after 35 years I am still discovering new delights secreted around the island. Idyllic sandy coves with crystal waters, rugged mountain walks, forests and lively restaurants perched offering magical views. Each month I find myself thinking that this is my favourite time of year. Indeed if asked, I'd be hard pushed to choose the best month. Summer is my beach time. Days of luxuriating in turquoise warm seas and balmy nights. Yet winter has its own unique delights. They say the sun shines virtually every day in Majorca. If you wake with rain, it usually clears. Cooler days enable a pleasant wander around the magnificent city of Palma. Ever vibrant throughout the year, with an elegant variety of shops to rival any top European city. Every day there is a bustling market somewhere on the island. I enjoy leisurely strolls in the countryside or a visit to a vineyard. Mostly we take the time to travel around the island to discover new little gems. We nearly always root out an excellent menu del día. Satisfied to head home when the sun dips after 5pm. Some time ago I noted however long my stay in Majorca it was never enough. So, I decided to stay!

Commentary like this is tricky to write without coming across like a smug twit. Although it is true that we have summers filled with guaranteed sunshine, beaches to rival the best of the Caribbean, an imposing Jurassic mountain range, fresh tasty Mediterranean cuisine, and deep historical and cultural heritage, the main reason I love Majorca is because it feels like home. I first holidayed on the island some 40 years ago (I know, I don’t look old enough) and can vividly remember learning how to swim with my father, blurly snapping three-masted schooners on my Kodak Brownie 127, eating endless sugar-dusted ensaimadas, and being fascinated by Mallorquin dancing at La Granja. We came back most years. In my 20s, I spent an entire summer in Magaluf serving pints to drunken youths. In my 30s, I settled in Majorca permanently. It’s not perfect, nowhere is, but of all the places I’ve lived (Sussex, Surrey, Nottinghamshire, Herefordshire, Malaga), this island feels most like home, and I am so grateful we found each other.

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The Rafa Nadal Academy, the perfect sports destination

The Rafa Nadal Academy is the one of the world’s leading centres for tennis, and for British people who go to Spain for sport it is one of the top destinations.

The Rafa Nadal Academy is the one of the world’s leading centres for tennis, and for British people who go to Spain for sport it is one of the top destinations. There are many reasons why. Firstly, the Academy has cutting-edge facilities, in keeping with current times, and a technical team which is led by Toni Nadal. Second, there is the location - Majorca, an island with an idyllic setting, a Mediterranean climate and ideal terrain for sport. In addition, Majorca’s fascinating cultural heritage, superb gastronomy and outstanding recreational amenities have established the island as one of the world’s foremost sports and holiday destinations.

The project was created by Rafa Nadal in 2016 with the principal aim of providing education through sport and academic programmes which have a positive effect on the personal development and well-rounded education of players, both young and old.

The Academy has cemented its prestige thanks to its annual programme for maximising the potential of each player at a high-performance centre where, from September to June, they can combine tennis with excellence in their studies. The main objective is that students continue their tennis careers, with their training based on the methodology that has taken Rafa to the highest level, while also maintaining their academic studies. This has been the case with young British players such as Max Basing, Barney Fitzpatrick and Oliver Foran, who has graduated this year from the Rafa Nadal International School, which is part of the Academy complex.

Thanks to personalised tennis programmes, it is adults who most benefit from a perfect sporting holiday. The experience at the Rafa Nadal Sports Centre, the sports facility for adults, with 67 spacious rooms, a 1,000 square metre fitness centre, spa, semi-Olympic-sized pool and restaurant, guarantees an unforgettable stay.

Aerial view of the Rafa Nadal Academy 2021.

In response to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 health crisis, the Rafa Nadal Academy has become a model of security, confidence and well-being.

In response to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 health crisis, the Rafa Nadal Academy has become a model of security, confidence and well-being. The implementation of protocols has served as an example at national and international levels and has ensured that everyone can play safely.

MORE INFORMATION:
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 PHONE - 0034 971 845 022
SECURING RESIDENCY IN MAJORCA IN TIME FOR BREXIT

If you are hoping to move to live in Majorca, with no certainty beyond 2020, time is running out to secure your position before full Brexit takes effect.

If you are lawfully settled in Spain before the transition period deadline of December 31, 2020, you can lock in guaranteed citizens’ rights under the UK/EU Withdrawal Agreement. This provides the right to remain and continue accessing social security, education and employment opportunities for as long as you remain Spanish resident. You would also be entitled to healthcare benefits and the annual cost-of-living increases to the UK State Pension.

However, anyone arriving from 2021 will have restricted movement in Spain and face a new residence regime, likely to be more stringent than today.

**Becoming lawfully resident in Spain**

For any UK nationals who want the freedom to stay in Spain for most of the year, it is crucial to register with the local authorities and hold a valid Spanish residence document before the end of 2020.

If you also meet the criteria to be tax resident, you need to formally register with the Spanish tax office. Be sure to submit annual income tax returns and, where applicable, wealth tax returns and Modelo 720 for overseas assets.

You must continue to meet the conditions of residence in Spain to retain the right to remain and access associated benefits.

**What changes in 2021?**

From 1 January 2021, UK nationals without settled status lose automatic freedom of movement and are likely to be treated as ‘third country’ (non-EU) citizens. This means you would only legally be able to stay in Spain for up to 90 days in any 180-day period without a visa/permit.

UK citizens will, of course, still be able to acquire Spanish residency... but under unknown rules and requirements. Current rules for non-EU/EEA citizens require each individual to demonstrate a minimum income and apply before arriving in Spain.

So if you are thinking about moving permanently to Majorca, it will never be easier than today – wherever possible, relocate and register before the end of 2020 to be protected by the Withdrawal Agreement.

For the best results, take personalised advice to ensure your tax, estate planning, pensions and investments are set up in the best way for your life in Majorca, before and after Brexit.

Blevins Franks accepts no liability for any loss resulting from any action or inaction or omission as a result of reading this article, which is general in nature and not specific to your circumstances.

Keep up to date on the financial issues that may affect you on the Blevins Franks news page at www.blevinsfranks.com

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*by Cathal Rochford, Partner Blevins Franks*

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**What does Brexit mean for your new life in Mallorca?**

If you are planning on moving to Spain, you need to understand how your position changes when the Brexit transition period ends on 31 December 2020 - whether you are moving before or after this date.

Blevins Franks specialises in providing residence, tax and financial planning advice to UK nationals living in and moving to Spain. With offices in both the UK and Mallorca, we are ideally placed to advise on the potential impact of Brexit and help you prepare for residence in Mallorca.

Talk to the people who know

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justine Knox is one of the most successful British business people on the island. Here she explains her secret of her success.

Q. — Justine, could you tell us a bit about yourself and your company?

A. — My company, Knox Design, specialises in interior design. On the one hand, we have the Knox Home Store, a large shop in the Son Bugadellas business area filled with furniture, fabrics, wallpaper, home accessories and objets d’art. On the other, there are my interior design projects. These two strands of the business are mutually complementary, as I am able to source the items for my projects from my range of top quality items, and often find myself providing interior design consultations on the back of a customer purchase in the store. Knox Design is a family business that we have built over the last 16 years, fuelled by a team of employees who are fully committed to the business. We take our work very seriously and keep very high standards, but we have fun too. ‘Service with a smile’ is important at Knox Design.

Q. — Knox Design has built up a fantastic reputation. What are the interior design projects which you have most enjoyed?

A. — Indeed, Knox Design has built a solid reputation over the years, as attested by the steady flow of interior design projects that keep us busy all year round. However, this has become even more evident during the pandemic: clients who were unable to travel out to the island decided to put their trust in my work and decisions to furnish their second homes. We have been exceptionally busy during the lockdown with these projects so, despite not having had the store open to the public, there has been activity and an income stream, which is essential for private businesses at this time. The projects I enjoy the most are those where I am given a budget (hopefully large enough) and the freedom to decorate the property as I see fit. I can let my imagination run wild and originality flow throughout; the best part is seeing the client’s reaction on first viewing: surprise and delight for the client, and utter satisfaction for me.

Q. — What are your interior design tips?

A. — Every space is different and there is no ‘one size fits all’. However, I would stress that it is important to decide on a colour palette and the overall feel you wish to create. This will determine the types of materials, textures and colours you will use. Try neutral tones for the background but be bold; pick out an accent colour and bring it out in the soft furnishings and décor items.

Q. — You were educated locally; how do you think Majorca has changed over the years?

A. — Majorca, like most major holiday destinations, has changed dramatically over the years. I think one of the main changes has been that we no longer only ‘sun and sand’ destination visitors from all over the world come to Majorca for its range of outdoor activities (golf, hiking, cycling, yachting) and its stunning countryside. This, coupled with the vast availability of flights, makes it an ideal location for a second home. This has certainly had a positive impact on my business and, despite short term lulls like the lockdown period, it is showing no signs of slowing down in the long term.

Q. — As a leading businessperson in Majorca, what tips would you give to people in Britain who might be interested in starting a business on the island?

A. — I would definitely recommend that you learn as much Spanish as you can, or else make sure that you have trusted staff that can assist in this regard. It is also important to engage the services of good people to provide tax and labour advice, as this is quite complicated here in Spain. On an island such as Majorca, competition is stiff, so expect to work hard to keep afloat.

Q. — What are your future projects?

A. — I am always dreaming up new projects that are related to my core business of interior design. One of the things that excites me the most is teaching what I have learned over the years.

‘SERVICE WITH A SMILE’

I am always dreaming up new projects that are related to my core business of interior design. One of the things that excites me the most is teaching what I have learned over the years.
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The Majorca Daily Bulletin talks to The Academy International School and asks three women about their views about living here, enjoying a trouble-free relocation and the current school situation.

Three women in education: their lives in Majorca

The hours, weeks, months, years of dedication that would be needed and I was not mistaken!

Somehow, the school happened and took over my life! My philosophy of how learning should be full of joy and love for young children, a real passion for their school, a holistic approach and an enjoyment of learning which all children have inside them. With a positive foundation our children grow up to be interesting, keeping the positive impact of the family business beyond any expectations!

I am very proud of all my family and believe that fate led me in the right direction!

I would like to mention here all the wonderful people I have worked with at The Academy over the years as teachers, office staff, caretakers, cleaners, cooks etc - all making it such a wonderful place to be! Thank you all!

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How do you and your family get to enjoy Mallorca this summer?

As the Covid19 pandemic grew, so did the desire for our customers to visit their holiday homes and yachts here in Mallorca. Once here, the owners of yachts and properties are in relative isolation. Just imagine how isolated you can be enjoying your boat in Cala Figuera, Formentor or one of the many secluded bays and anchorage spots of Puerto Pollensa and Alcudia with your friends and family.

But how could we ensure our customers could they get here safely? Security at commercial airports will have new levels of discomfort, especially if travelling with youngsters and elderly. Private jet travel ensures you are travelling with people you know and passenger handling is through private terminals. The most expensive part of using a jet is the repositioning the aircraft: i.e. flying it empty on its return leg to its origin.

By having an aircraft based in Palma and developing a schedule from our network and client base, we can fly full on both outbound and return to Mallorca. We can even have individuals and some groups sharing and getting the price down to a per-seat cost. I think you will be pleasantly surprised at the price, but it does depend on the size of your party and where you are flying from. The best way of finding out is to contact Amanda in the Pollensa office who is running the schedule. The aircraft is LearJet 60XR that seats 7 comfortably with 4 club seats and a sofa for 3. It can fly at 41,000 ft, so you travel above the normal traffic, getting you here safely, quickly and affordably.

Russell Currie has been living and working with British Premium Brands for over 30 years in Puerto Pollensa, Mallorca. “The island has been good to my family for many years and it is such a lovely place to base a boat and/or a second home. My worry was that this year there was a growing mindset to leave travel until next year because of the discomfort and potential health risk of being in the company of strangers in crowded and confined spaces. The Executive Jet Project was purely an instrument to encourage people to get something good out of the 2020 Summer season. Our local economy depends on tourism, in particular those visitors who have invested in homes and yachts. The real cost of owning a high value discretionary asset is when you can’t enjoy it and one summer without enjoying Mallorca with your loved ones is a Summer wasted.”

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Our team is not only here to look after your investment, but also to look after all the small details, like guiding our customers to where the best boating beauty spots are depending on the weather or even advising on something seasonally interesting like a local festivity. The team’s professionalism and dedication to customer service has been formally recognised with many accolades in the industry. Awards that endorse our hard work, passion and love for the marine leisure sector. Why not put this proud history and wealth of experience into action to ensure you achieve a smooth and enjoyable boating lifestyle.

Our team are local, bilingual and fully trained in their field. We are famous for hosting some of the most enjoyable social events, both on and off the water; a tradition that is definitely here to stay.

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When you travel around Mediterranean countries you see certain vegetables that crop up in every market and find their way on to plates in every restaurant. The three most ubiquitous are aubergines, red peppers and tomatoes: they are the summer trio par excellence and you’ll come across them throughout the Med. Majorca’s most famous dish using this toothsome trio is called tumbet — the aubergines, red peppers and a thick succulent tomato sauce combine with sliced potatoes for a treat that should be at the top of your ‘must’ list during a summer visit. Tumbet is one of the islanders’ great summer favourites and you will find it on the menus of restaurants in Palma and in towns such as Inca and Sineu.
One of the beauties of tumbet is that it is made with the best aubergines I have ever used — those grown in Majorca. In every recipe that calls for aubergines, no matter where the original comes from, you will be told to salt the slices of aubergines to rid them of their bitter juices: you won’t have to do that with Majorcan aubergines because they’re the sweetest you’ll ever come across.

After you start to sauté it slowly and turn it into a thick tomato sauce, leftovers can be used for another dish or frozen for later... perhaps in another tumbet.

○ Start the tumbet by slicing the peeled potatoes into thin rounds using a sharp knife or a mandolin. Sauté them in the frying pan with plenty of virgen extra olive oil, but over a low heat so they do not brown. You will also get good results by grating the sliced potatoes into an ovenproof dish, toasting them in plenty of oil, covering the dish with tinfoil, and baking it in a medium oven for 50 minutes or until the potatoes are soft. Add salt and pepper to taste. Slice the aubergines into rounds of about 1cm thick and sauté them on both sides in the frying pan in a single layer with about 2cms of virgen extra olive oil. Aubergines soak up a great deal of oil so you may have to add more to frying pan. Keep the heat at medium so they don’t scorch and transfer them, unbroken if possible, to a plate after they have been sautéed on both sides.

○ Buy the thick red peppers known as pimientos de asar (peppers for roasting). If you are roasting them for making a salada (another scrummy dish for summer eating) then cut some of them into strips for adding to the tumbet. If not, break the pimientos into bite size pieces, which is how Majorcan housewives of the old school do it. They never use a knife to cut up peppers, green or red. Sauté the red pepper pieces over a medium heat until they are al dente. Transfer them to a plate.

○ Make a thick tomato sauce with two kilos of the ramellet tomatoes mentioned above. If you cannot get ramellet tomatoes, or if you are making a tumbet in England, ripe plum tomatoes are an acceptable substitute. Plum tomatoes in Spain are called tomates de pera (pear potatoes).

○ If you have a vegetable mill, roughly cut the unpeeled tomatoes and sauté them in plenty of virgen extra olive oil for 45 minutes or until they are thick and pulpy. Put the mixture through the vegetable mill and reduce it, uncovered, over a medium heat. The sauce must always be very thick, never watery.

○ If you’re not using a vegetable mill, first peel the tomatoes, chop them finely and sauté them as before. The sauce should be very thick and slightly oily. Garlic and herbs of your choice can be added, as well as salt to taste.

○ Arrange the sliced potatoes in a layer in a rectangular or round earthenware dish and add a good layer of aubergine slices. Sprinkle the pieces of red peppers over the surface. Finally, cover the surface with the thick tomato sauce. I repeat once more that the sauce must be very thick: you cannot make a memorable tumbet with a runny tomato sauce.

○ At this stage most Majorcan cooks I know put the tumbet into a medium oven for 20 minutes or so: this allows the ingredients to settle down, helps to bring the textures together and allows the flavours to mingle. For other cooks, the tumbet is ready when it has been assembled.

○ In either case it is essential the tumbet rests for a couple of hours and is then eaten at room temperature. Some people also include courgettes but the purists say this makes the dish less authentic. I prefer it without cougettes because they are full of water and that spoils the concentrated flavour of the dish.

○ Some Majorcan cooks assemble the tumbet with slices of tender lamb or pork fillet. In coastal areas, housewives and restaurant cooks are fond of adding nuggets of fish such as grouper or monkfish.

○ Tumbet can also be served with grilled meats such as pork tenderloin and lamb chops.

○ Sometimes each portion comes with a couple of fried eggs on top, making it a nice simple luncheon for a summer’s day.
‘Take the plunge, you will never regret it’

“Despite the coronavirus crisis and the predictions to the contrary the market at the moment is good with a high level of interest.”

Interview with Jorge Forteza, Chief Executive of Nova Properties.

“Without any doubt Majorca has consistently been much more desirable than the Spanish mainland with its mixture of experiences all within easy reach wherever on the island you decide to settle.”

Looking to buy a property on Majorca, Jorge Forteza of Nova Mallorca explains why it’s a great investment.

Q.— What is the state of the real estate market at the moment?
A. — Despite the coronavirus crisis and the predictions to the contrary the market at the moment is good with a high level of interest, which is not as surprising as you might think when you see how safe Majorca is compared to many other areas and countries.

Q.— Do you think that owning a property on this island will always be a dream for many people?
A. — Absolutely, a paradise with a superb climate, excellent facilities, a range of excellent choices to eat at all budget levels and of course a mixture of sports available such as golf, tennis sailing etc. as well as the sun, beaches and of course the wide range of cultural activities in Palma city itself and all within two hours flying time of the UK.

Q.— You have many years of experience in the real estate market, how does this help you when it comes to buying and selling on the island?
A. — Obviously also one of the oldest established agencies on the island, Nova was founded in 1969, we have a wealth of experience and can offer a wide range of all types of properties and are also used to dealing with a wide range of clients.

We have, at Nova, over the years built up an excellent reputation as well as an excellent team of contacts such as lawyers, notaries, banks and tradesmen of all types to assist in making a client’s buying experience as smooth and enjoyable as is possible.

Q.— What message do you have for prospective buyers who are reading this in Britain?
A. — Take the plunge, you will never regret it, Majorca and the team at Nova await you with, as mentioned earlier, a wide range of experiences and activities to suit all tastes, beautiful beaches, fabulous countryside, delightful villages and mountains to explore and the beautiful city of Palma.

Q.— Is owning a property on Majorca still a good investment?
A. — Without any doubt Majorca has consistently been much more desirable than the Spanish mainland with its mixture of experiences all within easy reach wherever on the island you decide to settle.

Q.— What part of the island is selling the best at the moment?
A. — This depends on the type of property, obviously the south west remains very popular because of its all year round facilities and easy access to Palma city, beaches, marinas, golf courses, restaurants but many other areas of the island also have a tremendous amount to offer and are selling well.

Q.— We have just come out of lockdown but the cases of the coronavirus have remained low, do you think that Majorca is an even safer place to live?
A. — Definitely, because of the sensible behaviour of the residents during lockdown here we survived with better results than the mainland and have proved to be a safe destination.

Q.— What tips would you give to prospective buyers?
A. — Always deal with an established agency who is a “Miembro Colegiado de Asociacion de Agentes de la Propiedad Inmobiliaria” (Chartered Member of Association of Real Estate Agents) with the security that offers.

An agency such as Nova who can offer you the benefit of their years of experience, professional and experienced staff and their well-established professional team of contacts to ensure your buying experience is informative, enjoyable and safe, and of course a wide range of properties of all types at all budget levels.
Cheers to Majorca

By Andrew Valente

It doesn’t seem like very long ago when there were three or four biggish wineries in Majorca and the number of wines on sale could be counted on the fingers of both hands. Although we were told wine was made in Ibiza and Minorca we never saw any of it — not even when we visited Ibiza or Minorca for a few days.

Today’s wine scene is totally different. In the Balearics there are now more than 70 wineries (mainly in Majorca) and they produce the staggering amount of almost 800 wines. That is not a misprint — it’s eight hundred wines. An incredible amount from such a small space.

And the island winemakers aren’t all Majorcan or even Spanish — some are Russian, German, Swedes, Swiss or Italian. They have one thing in common — they are making some really fine wines and have no difficulty at all in selling them, even although Majorcan wines are dearer than those of a similar quality from other parts of Spain.

What has happened in such a short time that has brought almost 800 wines on to restaurant menus and supermarket shelves and restaurant menus? It’s simply that winemakers all over the world — not only in Majorca — have discovered the secret of how to make fine wines.

The secret? It’s a wine-making method that’s always been in place but until about 30 years ago only an enlightened few ever bothered to apply it.

What it comes down to is that very fine wines are made with very fine grapes: if there is no quality in the grapes it will also be absent from the wine. You can’t put the engine of a Mini into a Formula-1 racing car and expect to win a Grand Prix.

So how do you select one of those almost 800 wines when you’re browsing among the shelves of specialist shops or supermarkets, or looking at a restaurant’s wine list?

Any Majorcan wines you see in shops or on restaurant menus (be they red, white or rosado) will be worth trying. If you were to close your eyes and stab at the menu with a finger, you’ll be very pleased with the wine that pure chance has thrown up. However, as I have mentioned above, Majorca’s very fine wines are infrequent on the dear side, and a stab-in-the-dark way of selecting them may produce one that costs more than you want to pay.

So when you are faced with bottles of Majorcan wines on the shelf, or names on a restaurant menu, forget about labels and pay no attention to wine list names and, instead, look at the prices — and buy the dearest one you can afford. That way you will be on a winner every time.

There is no way I can mention all 70 wineries in the Balearics (I don’t even know all of their names) so I will name only two that are best for variety and in terms of value for money.

One is the José L. Ferrer winery in Binisalem (Tel:971-511050) which has been exporting their wines to England since the 1930s and the other is Macià Batle of Santa Maria del Cami. Both of them have state-of-the-art installations.

You can visit both but you must first make a booking. You will be shown how their wines are made and will also be able to taste some. You can also buy their wines on the premises.

During the searing heat of a Majorcan summer, a favourite thirst quencher both here and on the mainland is an old-fashioned gin and tonic, with a slice of lemon or lime to give it and even fresher look and taste.

These days I drink three kinds of gin: Xoriguer from Minorca, Gordon’s from England and Citadelle from France, an unusual one in that it is distilled with 19 herbs and spices. But in any given year I drink more Xoriguer than Gordon’s or Citadelle.

There is a very good reason why a bottle of Xoriguer is consumed quicker than the other two: it is a winter and a summer drink. Gordon’s is strictly for drinking during the hot weather with tonic. I sip Citadelle neat during the winter because I find a tonic water masks the intrinsic flavour provided by those 19 herbs and spices.

But Xoriguer plays a dual role: I can drink it with tonic in summer and neat during the winter months. Xoriguer, indeed, was the first gin I was able to drink neat and it remained the only one until about 15 years ago when I discovered Citadelle, which is at its best when sipped in tiny amounts. Xoriguer is more versatile than Citadelle because the tonic water doesn’t spoil it.

I hadn’t heard of Xoriguer until I came to live in Majorca and right from the first trial sip I realised I liked it neat. Every other gin I know, especially Gordon’s, always seems rather perfumed. Indeed, when taken neat, Gordon’s is like drinking after-shave lotion. There’s nothing scented about Xoriguer and it makes a good after-dinner tipple on cold winter nights.

That ‘x’ in the name is pronounced as if it were a ‘ch’ sound and the name comes from a smallish bird of prey that is fairly common in Minorca. It feeds mainly on field rats and helps to keep the countryside free of crop-guzzling rodents.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE
Catching label for his gin but also an un-
man and he not only designed an eye-
uor-making business, he named it after
since 1784 and had a mill called Xoriguer.
The Pons family had been millers
century that Xoriguer came on the scene.
British troops left.
Minorcans continued to drink it when the
land at that time, but unavailable in Mi-
ite drink was gin, highly popular in Eng-
ular problem for the bar owners: their favour-
tories outside of Minorca can use the island’s
name to sell their products.
If you want to taste a drink that is
unique to Majorca you can do so at any
bar on the island. The drink is called Palo,
and up until about 60 years ago it was the
island’s most popular preprandial drink.
Xoriguer won Geographic Denomina-
tion status in 1997 under the name of Gin
de Menorca. This means that no distiller-
ies outside of Minorca can use the island’s
name to sell their products.
Xoriguer is now exported to several
European countries and the Pons family
were very pleased years ago when they
found a niche in English wine shops and
supermarkets. As Minorcan gin was first
made for British sailors, it is appropriate it
is sold in England.
Xoriguer is still distilled from local wine
(instead of the more usual cereal) and
they use a source of heat provided by
wood-burning fires. Apart from juniper
berries, they also add coriander seeds, an-
gelic root, cinnamon, cumin and orange
peel. Before the gin is bottled it is kept in
American white oak barrels for a short
time to give the gin’s aromas and flavours
a deeper complexity. Xoriguer is sold in
three distinctive bottles. The most com-
on one is made from green glass and has
a tiny handle attached to the neck. The
other two are ceramic and also come with
the traditional handle. The ceramic bot-
ties are glazed on the inside, so the baked
clay in no way affects the taste of the gin.
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Come on board and enjoy the ride

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