



BLISSed-OUT BALEARICS

They're two of the most popular destinations for beauty, beats and beach vibes – but will you choose Mallorca or Ibiza?



Valldemossa is bloomin' lovely



MALLORCA
There's breathtaking scenery to explore off the beaten track, finds writer Rosie Gizauskas.

PAY A VISIT TO THE PALACE

As one of the most popular destinations in the Mediterranean, Mallorca's nightlife, museums and restaurant scene are legendary. But look beneath the surface and you'll find some of Europe's most beautiful unspoilt scenery. The picturesque village of Valldemossa in the heart of the Tramuntana mountains is a must-see. It's situated around the Real Cartuja, a palace and monastery that dates back to the 14th century and looks out over epic mountain vistas. Entry costs £8 (Cartujadevalldemossa.com). While you're in town, try a coca de patata, £1.70 from the Panadería Ca'n Molinas bakery, a yummy local cake made with potato. It's *much* tastier than it sounds.

EAT LIKE THE LOCALS

Check out the gorgeous coastal village of Deià, high up on the Serra de Tramuntana mountain range. The quiet, cobbled lanes and unforgettable views will make you want to sell up and move here immediately. Renowned poet and writer Robert Graves was so inspired, he did just that. Richard Branson even owned a luxury hotel here, tucked around one of the hard-to-reach coves. There are heaps of amazing restaurants, but don't miss dinner on the terrace at super-chilled Es Punt, where we feasted on padrón peppers, £6, and



patatas bravas, £4.50, washed down with local wines until late.

STAY IN AN ECO HOTEL

In Alaró, a peaceful, traditional Mallorcan village in a valley at the foot of the Serra de Tramuntana mountains, you'll find Alaró Natura Rural Suites. This small, family-run boutique hotel was once a shoe factory and is now committed to running sustainably. Every bedroom is different, some with dramatic beams, but all designed in a chic, minimalist aesthetic. There's even a baby tree in a pot in each room that you can care for during your stay – and when you leave, the family will plant it outside for you. The hotel is a great spot for hiking or cycling or perfect if you just want to enjoy a wine tasting experience in the gorge open-plan dining area, £15 per person. Rooms cost from £93 per night, including breakfast (Alaronatura.com).

TAKE A HIKE

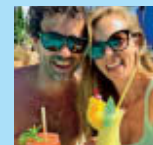
With an inviting backdrop of gentle, undulating green hills, Mallorca is a brilliant destination for exploring nature. To trek through the Serra de Tramuntana, first jump in a Jeep with Off Road Mallorca. An expert will drive you up into the hills in style while you pretend you're in an action film, £59 per person for three hours (Offroadmallorca.com). Take in the lose-yourself views out over pine forests and the sea, before passing by the Cases de Ses Collidores restoration, which is being funded by Spain's sustainable tourist tax. This house on the Planícia estate was once used as shelter by olive pickers, but is now being converted into a refuge for hikers to sleep in after a long day in the mountains. Back in Alaró, head out for the hour-long cliffside coastal walk from Banyalbufar to Port des Canonge. By the end you'll have more than earned a generous helping of paella, £8, with a side of sea view at Restaurante Can Madó (Canmado.com).

Enjoy suite dreams at Alaró



Photography: Getty Images, Jose Juan Gonzalez, Shutterstock

TRAVEL



IBIZA
Columnist Kate Wills, boyfriend Guy and daughter Blake, one, discover the family side to the famous party isle.

TOUR THE OLD TOWN

The last time I was in Ibiza I was partying until dawn, but these days I'm more likely to be getting up at that time. Staying in the quiet village of San Rafael in the island's centre means you're away from the 3am booming base, but still just a 15-minute drive from the iconic old town, Dalt Vila. Perched high on a hill, this UNESCO World Heritage Site and walled fortress dates back 2,500 years. Climb to the very top for views out over the Med and then wander back down, through cobbled streets and past Ibiza Town's hippy shops and cafes.

HIT THE DECK

From the marina in the old town, we chartered a cruise with Fancy Boats to the nearby island of Formentera. It's a child-friendly boat with teeny life-jackets, toys and a dark, quiet cabin for Blake to nap in while we sunbathe on the plush deck. Captain Paul takes passengers wherever the wind and weather dictates. We anchored at a particularly aquamarine patch



Get some beauty sleep at Casa Panorama; the squid game is strong in Ibiza

FYI

Fly from London to Ibiza from £67 return, and Mallorca from £50 return, with Britishairways.com. Plan your trip at Illesbalears.travel.

of blue for a snorkel and a splash about, before eating a delicious buffet lunch of local meats and cheeses. A half-day cruise with lunch and drinks costs £60 per person (Fancyboatsibiza.com).

GET THE COCKTAILS IN

Head to the hills overlooking San Antonio to Pikes, the legendary Ibizan hotel where Freddie Mercury held a raucous birthday party and Wham! filmed their *Club Tropicana* video. The burger, £17, seems steep – but trust me, it is sublime – and although drinks are sadly not free as the song suggests, a neon-bright piña colada, £10, is a must (Pikesibiza.com). Wine fans need to pay a visit to Can Rich, an idyllic organic winery set in the rolling Ibizan countryside. After a free hour-long tour, sample the winery's delicious rose brut, as well as its home-grown olive oil (Bodegascanrich.com). If you want to get even boozier, head to Fluxà to make your own hierbas ibicencas, a delicious (and very strong) local liqueur made from 18 different plants – which you can then take home (Fluxaibiza.com).

ENTER THE VILLA

When travelling with little ones, a villa is often an easier choice than a hotel. The four-bedroom Casa Panorama has a huge pool, spacious cabanas for shade, a giant BBQ and alfresco dining area. Stay for £45.50 per person per night (Vrbo.com). Give yourself the five-star treatment by booking an



Seas the day on a Fancy Boat

in-villa massage with White Island Wellness, £94 for one hour (Whiteislandwellness.com). Self-catering means you're free to explore local restaurants, and we found a gem 15 minutes away in the charming village of Santa Gertrudis. This slice of old Ibiza has all-white buildings and a bougainvillea-dripped square, where you'll find Bottega Il Buco. It looks like a quaint local joint with its mismatched tables and handwritten menu, but it's an offshoot of the legendary New York restaurant Il Buco. We ate our body weight in freshly baked focaccia topped with figs, mozzarella and pistachio, £15, and sipped chilled rosé, £7 a glass, as the sun went down.

SEAS THE DAY

The White Isle truly is a playground for adults and kids alike, and the family-friendly beach bar at Hotel Riomar in Santa Eulalia is as good as it gets. The golden sands here are buggy-accessible and smoke-free, there are plenty of shady areas, plus there's a lifeguard on duty. Grab a daybed and make a day of it. Dinner at the hotel's Ocean Brasserie overlooks the crashing waves, and has a top-notch kids' menu and highchairs. Blake tucked into fresh hake and fries, £8.50, while we slurped oysters, £20 for 12, and crispy calamari with limo mayo, £17 (Hotelriomar.com). **F**

Tropic like it's hot on gorge Ibizan beaches

