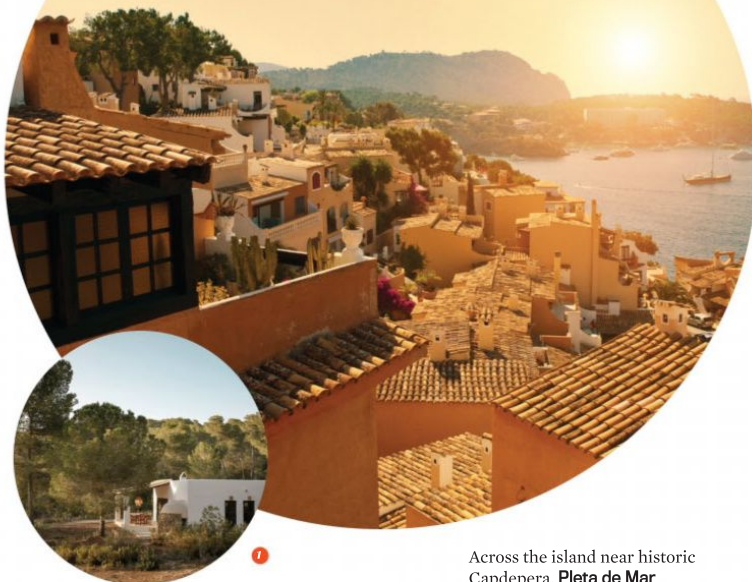


CITY FILE

THE BALEARIC ISLANDS

No longer just a clubber's paradise, the Balearics are emerging as a sophisticated—and tranquil— island retreat.

By Jessica Benavides Canepa



You know Spain's famed

Mediterranean isles for their azure waters sprinkled with secret coves and untouched beaches. But such incandescent charms are only the beginning on this diverse and cultured archipelago. Here, you can discover ancient settlements in Minorca, roam royal gardens and dine on Michelin-starred cuisine in Majorca, and, yes, party the night away in Ibiza—all in the same day. 🇪🇸 Still, this striking region is first and foremost a land of natural beauty. Capitalizing on its seaside splendor is a clutch of new hotels, from island to island and coast to coast. On Majorca's western shore, Richard Branson has unveiled **Son Bunyola** (virginlimitededition.com), an 18th-century estate where three exclusive-use villas—each with its own garden and swimming pool—are spread over 680 acres of verdant hillside.

"Time stands still when I dine beneath the fig trees at La Luna Nell'Orto, a romantic gem in the village of Sant Miquel that serves fresh local products prepared with an Italian touch."

AUDREY-ALIZÉE SICOT

Across the island near historic Capdepera, **Pleta de Mar** (pletademar.com) opened in May with 30 spacious suites, all featuring rustic-contemporary decor and landscaped terraces. On laid-back Minorca, the exclusive-use **Cugó Gran** (cugogranmenorca.com) debuted with 11 elegant suites, a vegetable garden, and a sparkling infinity-edge pool. Even Ibiza is joining the club, welcoming upscale hotels like **Nobu Hotel Ibiza Bay** (nobuhotelibizabay.com) that aim to rebrand the hedonistic island as a luxurious refuge.

Of course, there's more to the Balearics than where you rest your head. On Majorca and Ibiza, a fresh culinary scene is in full swing. New spas, bars, and even wineries are also upping the island ante. But on the warmest summer days, it's a trip to Formentera—the sleepy isle where little happens and even less changes—that promises the truest and bluest Balearic bliss.

MAIN: VICTOR TORRES/SHUTTERSTOCK; 4: MERCE GOST

“Maybe I’m a little biased, but the vibe at Nobu Hotel Ibiza Bay is like nowhere else on the island.”

ENRIQUE MANDL

LOCAL FAVORITES

	STAY	EAT	DRINK	SHOP	DO
 <p>AUDREY-ALIZÉE SICOT LUXURY LIFESTYLE CONCIERGE, ALIZÉE LIFESTYLE, IBIZA</p>	<p>Located in idyllic San Juan—one of my favorite northern Ibiza villages—the Giri Residence provides a minimalist, eco-friendly stay in perfect harmony with the island’s bohemian essence. thegiri.com</p>	<p>Time stands still when I dine beneath the fig trees at La Luna Nell’Orto, a romantic gem in the village of Sant Miquel that serves fresh local products prepared with an Italian touch. lunanelorto.com</p>	<p>La Granja, a members-only farmhouse retreat, is the island’s most exclusive spot for late-afternoon drinks accompanied by music from celebrated DJs straight from Tulum, Mexico. lagranjaibiza.com</p>	<p>Every year, Cocoq, a store located near Santa Eulalia, updates their seasonal inventory to feature exquisite handcrafted furnishings, home-decor items, handcrafted jewelry, clothing, and other island-based products. cocoqibiza.com</p>	<p>I enjoy hiking and exploring Ibiza’s many hidden calas [coves] and beaches. Cala Xarraca, one of the most beautiful, is [best reached] by boat, while the equally lovely Cala Mastella is best discovered on foot.</p>
 <p>MARC FOSH CHIEF, MAJORCA</p>	<p>Palma boasts some fantastic hotels, but my favorite is still Convent de la Missió, a 17th-century former convent with bright open spaces that create a sense of peaceful serenity. conventdelamissio.com</p>	<p>Before enjoying lunch at my restaurant [the Michelin-starred Marc Fosh at Convent de la Missió], stop by Mercat de l’Olivar for a glass of Champagne and a fresh oyster or two. marcfosh.com; mercatolivar.com</p>	<p>Palma’s Brassclub serves classic and designer cocktails by Rafa Martin, one of Spain’s best bartenders. But my favorite place to chill out with a mojito and amazing views is the Sky Bar at the hotel Hostal Cuba. brassclub.com; hotelhostalcuba.com</p>	<p>I enjoy browsing the shelves at La Vinoteca, a beautiful wine shop offering more than 2,000 international wines. It is run by my friend Juan Luis, a true wine fanatic who also makes his own vintages. lavinoteca.info</p>	<p>There’s a fantastic coastline walk in Majorca from Banyalbufar to Es Ports des Canonge where you’ll find excellent paella at C’an Toni Monero. +34.971.61.0426</p>
 <p>ENRIQUE MANDL GENERAL MANAGER, NOBU HOTEL, IBIZA BAY</p>	<p>Maybe I’m a little biased, but the vibe at Nobu Hotel Ibiza Bay is like nowhere else on the island. The rooms feature amazing sea views overlooking Playa Talamanca, my favorite beach for chilling and relaxing. nobuhotelibizabay.com</p>	<p>I highly recommend the beachside eatery El Chiringuito Es Cavallet, especially for their sublime seafood dishes. It’s also a great place to enjoy a cocktail while watching the sunset. elchiringuitoibiza.com</p>	<p>I enjoy the scene at Macao Café, a vibrant courtyard restaurant and hub for cosmopolitan locals and visitors. It really comes alive after dark. +34.971.19.7835</p>	<p>Ibiza’s Old Town is a shopper’s haven, with global retailers, boutique shops, and markets. Here you can find designer labels alongside locally sourced products, including Ibiza’s famous salt and organic soaps.</p>	<p>Explore the lesser-known parts of Ibiza, like the picturesque village of Santa Gertrudis. It’s a charming place surrounded by nature, with whitewashed houses, artist galleries, and a lively main square.</p>
 <p>NÚRIA DEYÀ JEWELRY DESIGNER, MINORCA</p>	<p>Surprisingly, my favorite stay is not by the beach. Minorca’s Ses Sucreres, a tiny inland hotel in the town of Ferreries, gets my vote for its owners’ acute attention to detail. hotelsesucreres.com</p>	<p>Sant Patrici offers an eclectic menu with both traditional and creative dishes that are combined with homemade cheese and wine in a spectacular setting. santpatrici.com</p>	<p>Blue Café & Lounge at the Artiem Audax hotel is the ideal place to enjoy a smooth gin and tonic with live music and magnificent views over Cala Galdana. It’s the perfect way to end a summer day. artiemhotels.com</p>	<p>For contemporary jewelry lovingly made by hand using materials inspired by the island, look no further than my showroom. For other artisanal wares, I’d recommend a visit to the Centre Artesanal in Es Mercadal. nuriadeya.com; artesianlademenorca.com</p>	<p>Go for a walk around Camí de Cavalls, a scenic footpath that runs along the entire coast of Minorca, and visit incredible coves like Cala en Turqueta and Cala Macarella.</p>
 <p>FRANCESC GRIMALT OENOLOGIST, 4KILOS WINES, MAJORCA</p>	<p>I stop by the Portxol Hotel—situated on Palma’s historic harbor—whenever possible. The ambience there is laid-back and inviting, and it’s very close to the port’s best eateries and landmarks. portxol.com</p>	<p>Among my many favorites, Celler Sa Sinia in the enchanting village of Portocolom is a memorable seaside find serving delectable fish dishes and close to fantastic nautical views. cellersasinia.com</p>	<p>Garito Café in Palma is an emblematic Majorca must-visit serving classic cocktails and a lineup of local DJs spinning original house, trance, and chill-out compilations. garitocafe.com</p>	<p>Explore the pedestrian center of Palma. There you’ll find plenty of original treasures in tiny local shops selling artisan trinkets, furniture, and clothing.</p>	<p>The weather here is pleasant year-round, so outdoor activities are a must. Hike and cycle in and around the massive Tramuntana Mountains, or explore the lesser-known corners of Majorca by boat. ibiza.com</p>

ILLUSTRATIONS: GARY WILLIAM MUSGRAVE