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# Forbes

## BALEARIC ISLANDS

### Quality Over Quantity

While tourism remains a cornerstone of the Balearic Islands' economy, the government is adopting a proactive and holistic approach to ensure that tourism is not only profitable but also sustainable and beneficial. By promoting cultural and sport tourism, engaging with local communities, and prioritizing environmental conservation, the Balearic Islands can set an example of responsible and inclusive tourism development for other destinations to follow.







# BALEARIC ISLANDS

## Balancing Community, Sustainability & Growth

The Balearic Islands have long been a magnet for tourists seeking sun, sand, and sea. Tourism has been established as the main economic and social driver of the Balearic Islands, representing more than 45% of the GDP, providing employment to over 200,000 workers, and generating annual revenues of over 16 billion euros in recent years. With an expected increase in GDP and the creation of thousands of new jobs by 2025, there is no denying the significant impact of tourism on the islands’ economy. This influx of tourists translates into more business for local shops, restaurants, and services, directly benefiting residents economically. In 2023, the Balearic Islands adjusted their tourism strategy to balance economic growth with heritage preservation. At ITB Berlin, President Margalida Prohens and Tourism Minister Jaume Bauzà unveiled a €350 million plan, funded by the sustainable tourism tax, aimed at boosting global competitiveness and improving residents’ quality of life. Initiatives include promoting non-seasonal tourism, upgrading infrastructure, and supporting cultural and sporting

projects. President Prohens detailed these plans at FITUR in Madrid, announcing a €21 million investment to foster innovation and energy efficiency in tourism. €12 million will support innovative projects, and €9 million will enhance efficiency in tourist

establishments. Additionally, a vocational training program aims to align workforce skills with industry needs, emphasizing the value of tourism-related professions. The Balearic Islands have become a top destination for sports tourism, offering ideal conditions and diverse activities that attract visitors year-round. In the first half of 2023 alone, 1.4 million tourists visited for sports-related activities. The islands host significant events like the Iron Man



70.3 in Alcúdia, which draws triathletes globally, and the Challenge Ciclista Mallorca, a premier cycling event broadcast internationally. Other notable cycling events include the Mallorca 312 and the Epic Camí de Cavalls.

Additionally, the islands offer a large line-up of marathons and trail running events such as the Zafiro Palma Marathon and the Ibiza Marathon.

Golf tourism is also prominent, with over 20 quality golf courses like Arabella Golf Son Vida and Golf Son Gual, and events like the Rolex Challenge Tour Grand Final. Tennis is highlighted by the ATP 250 Mallorca Championships, featuring top players like Novak Djokovic. The Balearic Islands also excel in water sports, with numerous regattas such as the Copa del Rey Mapfre and unique activities like psicobloc climbing. These diverse offerings not only extend the tourist season but also enhance the islands’ global appeal as a premier sports tourism destination.

Cultural tourism enriches both visitors and residents. By highlighting the Balearic Islands’ cultural heritage, such as traditional dances like Ball de Bot and Ball Pagès, local cuisine, and historical sites, the government can attract visitors year-round. Events like the Mallorca Live Festival, the most significant music event in the Balearic Islands, showcase interna-

Ajuntament de Maó



tional and national artists and promote cultural tourism. Additionally, traditional events such as the Sant Joan Festival in Menorca and the Eivissa Medieval Festival in Ibiza draw visitors while celebrating local customs and history. The government is working closely with local stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and community organizations, to ensure that tourism development aligns with the needs and interests of the community.

Initiatives that support local artisans, farmers, and cultural institutions are helping to strengthen the islands’ identity and create a more authentic and sustainable tourism experience for visitors. For instance, farmers’ markets selling local produce and crafts provide residents with economic benefits while giving tourists a taste of local life. As prices in the tourism sector rise and competition intensifies, it is essential for governments across the globe to address issues such as labor shortages, rising costs, and the saturation of tourist areas. By investing in infrastructure, training programs, and sustainable practices, the Balearic Islands are maintaining their competitive edge in the global tourism market while safeguarding the well-being of residents and preserving the islands’ natural beauty for future generations.

While tourism remains a cornerstone of the Balearic Islands’ economy, the government is adopting a proactive and holistic approach to ensure that tourism is not only profitable but also sustainable and beneficial. By promoting cultural and sport tourism, engaging with local communities, and prioritizing environmental conservation, the Balearic Islands can set an example of responsible and inclusive tourism development for other destinations to follow. ●





# FACES OF CHANGE

The Leaders Impacting Tourism in the Balearic Islands



**ZURAB  
POLOLIKASHVILI**  
Secretary-General  
UNWTO

**What is the best way to ensure tourism investment has the most positive impact?**  
We urgently need to grow investment in tourism. The data is encouraging: the UN Conference on Trade and Development World Investment Report 2023 shows that global foreign direct investment across all sectors, tourism included, reached approximately \$1.37 trillion that year, marking a modest increase of 3% from 2022. At the same time, we need to ensure this investment is targeted where it will make the most significant and most positive impact by building greater resilience and accelerating the shift towards greater sustainability. Tourism is firmly on the agenda of the UN, however delivering on this potential will require political commitment and significant investment. But given what is at stake and the potential benefits to be gained, it should be seen as a huge opportunity rather than a daunting challenge.



**JAUME BAUZÁ  
MAYOL**  
Minister of Tourism  
Culture & Sports  
Balearic Islands

**What aspects of the Balearic Islands are being promoted as top draws for tourists?**  
We want to highlight all the cultural, heritage, and gastronomic aspects that Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza, and Formentera offer. The recent UNESCO declaration recognizing Menorca Talayotic as a World Heritage site, along with other past recognitions such as the Menorcan Biosphere Reserve, Dalt Vila in Ibiza, and the Sibil's Song and the Serra de Tramuntana in Mallorca, adds to the importance of showcasing these examples of heritage on these islands with their various events. For instance, we have the Mallorca Live Festival in June. Regarding sports events, the Male and Female Mallorca Cycling Challenge allows different hotels in the north of Mallorca to open their doors and accommodate cyclists and their families, contributing to the economic activity of Can Picafort or Port de Pollença.



**ANTONIO COSTA  
COSTA**  
Vice President  
Balearic Islands

**What are the top economic priorities of the Balearic Islands currently?**  
Our first priority is the streamlining of public administration to become a facilitator of investments with high added value in key sectors. We aim to promote a policy of incentives to attract high-quality tourism year-round, integrating and developing sustainability including water management, attracting investment in new technologies, renewable energies, and in the nautical sector. We have our own tax regime in the Balearic Islands that introduces significant advantages for companies that establish themselves here and, above all, invest here. This includes what is called a reserve for investments, which reaches 90%. If a company has a profit of €100,000, it can reserve up to €90,000 of this amount to invest in the Balearic Islands in the future, and a 90% reduction in taxes is applied. This will help us promote private investment in the Balearic Islands.



## FORMENTERA: PREMIER ISLAND ESCAPE

### Sustainability & Authenticity

Formentera, in Spain's Balearic Islands, transcends the typical beach getaway. Crystal-clear waters with visibility exceeding 30 meters make this island a premier destination not only for nature lovers but also sailing enthusiasts, including the sailors participating in the prestigious Ophiusa Regatta, a competition that links the Catalan coast with Formentera every Spring.

Formentera's dedication to sustainability extends beyond its pristine waters. The island boasts a remarkable 90% utilization of desalinated water, a model for responsible water management in Spain. The Ses Salines Natural Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, teems with birdlife and hidden coves. The park includes historic salt flats, serving as an important rest area and nesting ground

for countless migratory birds, including the year-round resident flamingos. The Camí de Sa Pujada, a cobbled path dating back to the 13th century that winds its way up the island, offers visitors to Formentera a historical trek. This ancient route, also known as the Roman Road, serves as a tangible link to the island's past and is one of the islands most beautiful walks. The island is home to three lighthouses, including La Mola, on the eastern cliffs of the island, 120 meters above sea level. Farm-to-table cuisine showcases the island's freshest offerings. Michelin-starred restaurants like Can Marqués create innovative dishes using local, seasonal ingredients. Visitors can also savor the day's catch at beachfront restaurants like Beso Beach, where the emphasis is on simplicity and quality. Formentera effortlessly blends high-end luxury with sustainable tourism, exemplified by luxury accommodations like Gecko Hotel & Beach Club, upscale boutiques and artisan shops in Sant Francesc, and eco-friendly initiatives like electric bike rentals and the promotion of slow tourism. As Artal Mayans, the tourism councilor, emphasizes, "We endeavor to preserve the unique allure of Formentera while fostering responsible tourism that benefits both visitors and residents alike."●





# MENORCA: ELEGANCE IN THE MED

Sports, Sustainability & Culture



Menorca, a mesmerizing Mediterranean island, combines sustainable initiatives with its profound cultural heritage, along with 200 kilometers of coastline and magical coves, to create an authentic experience for discerning visitors. The island proudly holds the designation of Biosphere Reserve, emphasizing its dedication to environmental preservation. With over 1,500 archaeological sites, Menorca integrates its history with the Talayotic culture, dating back to 3500 BC, which has left behind impressive megalithic structures like talayots and taulas, some of which showcase astronomical alignments. The government recognizes the significance of these archaeological wonders in maintaining their UNESCO World Heritage status.

The island also boasts unique experiences such as the fascinating Museum of Menorca and the Isla del Rey. This tiny island in front of Mahón is a restored English military hospital that houses the contemporary art museum Hauser & Wirth. Foodies will also delight in natural delicacies such as the caldereta de llagosta, a Menorcan lobster stew, that can be found at seaside restaurants or in the old town of Mahón, the charming, walkable capital of the island. Sailing and watersports also thrive on this island. The Cami de Cavalls, a 185-kilometer path dating back to the 14th century, is perfect for those looking to hike, mountain bike, or ride horses. And as part of its investment plan, Menorca is developing a new

athletic track and enhancing existing sports facilities to establish itself as a premier destination for water sports, capitalizing on the island’s favorable climate and coastlines. As Adolfo Vilafranca Florit, President of the Insular Council, highlights, “Whether it is for canoeing enthusiasts or professional athletes seeking top-notch facilities, we want to offer an inviting space for all.” ●



# FACES OF CHANGE

The Leaders Impacting Tourism in the Balearic Islands



**TONI NADAL**  
Director  
ATP 250 Mallorca Championships

**What are your goals & aspirations for the tournament?**  
This tournament is an important international event aimed at boosting tourism in the region. I want to emphasize the uniqueness of having a grass tournament in a warm location, which makes it special. Players appreciate the treatment and amenities offered during the event. Our ambition is to become the best tournament leading up to Wimbledon. The tournament has featured the presence of significant figures in world tennis such as Medvedev, Djokovic, and Nadal. We strive to enhance the overall experience each year, ensuring top-notch facilities, excellent organization, and a welcoming atmosphere for all attendees, both players and fans alike, solidifying our reputation on the global tennis stage. Our commitment is to continually innovate and adapt, making each edition better than the last while celebrating the spirit of tennis.



**PABLO PEREZ D'ORS**  
Director  
Museu Fundació Juan March

**What makes the Museu Fundació Juan March stand out?**  
This museum, established in 1990 with only 34 works, has expanded to over 100 pieces, showcasing Spanish art from the late 20th century to 2000s. It is known for its visitor-friendly atmosphere, serving as a gateway to Spanish art for the public. Palma’s allure to tourists and residents from diverse backgrounds creates opportunities for cultural growth. The museum now offers activities in English and Spanish, aiming to appeal to foreign residents. In addition to the permanent collection, the museum hosts rotating exhibitions and educational programs that engage the local community and international visitors alike. By fostering a welcoming environment, the Museu Fundació Juan March enhances cultural appreciation and understanding, contributing significantly to Palma’s vibrant arts scene.



**BEN JAKOBER**  
Director & Founder  
Museo Sa Bassa Blanca

**How did Sa Bassa Blanca evolve into the culturally diverse museum it is today?**  
Sa Bassa Blanca transformed into a unique project after an encounter with architect Hassan Fati. With his involvement, the estate became a culturally diverse museum showcasing late 20th-century Spanish art. Palma’s global appeal enriched its offerings, attracting a wider audience with activities in different languages. The museum currently draws hundreds of daily visitors and boasts a collection of 2,500 works. It serves as a platform for cultural dialogue, fostering connections among diverse global visitors. Its beautiful surroundings, including a sculpture park and a rose garden, add to the visitor experience, making it not only a center of art but also a place of natural beauty and reflection. By blending art, culture, and nature, Museo Sa Bassa Blanca continues to evolve and inspire creativity and understanding among all who visit.







## MENORCA'S CULTURAL RICHES

Thriving, Sustainable, Diverse

### What are the main objectives of the government of Menorca in 2024?

Menorca has four main goals for this year. The first priority is to strengthen the island's economy. This involves a renewed focus on the agricultural sector, known for its Mahón cheese and other high-quality ecological products. Efforts are underway to revive lost crops and diversify agriculture, with ventures like cider production from a rediscovered Menorcan apple variety. Menorca also aims to support established industries like footwear and jewelry, while promoting sustainable tourism, the island's economic backbone. Environmental protection is another cornerstone of Menorca's vision. As a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve for three decades, the island strives for a balance between human activity and nature. Significant investments are being made in water treatment, waste management, and renewable energy, including the largest solar park in the Balearic Islands. Sustainable mobility is also being encouraged through the expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Our third key objective is improving public services. The administration recognizes the need for efficiency, aiming to deliver better services with fewer steps for our residents and visitors and eliminate unproductive spending. Finally, the government plans to significantly increase investment across various sectors. This includes infrastructure improvements like road upgrades,

### ADOLFO VILAFRANCA FLORIT

President, Insular Council of Menorca

cultural heritage preservation to maintain Menorca's UNESCO World Heritage status, and the development of sports facilities to enhance both the quality of life for residents and the attractiveness of the island for tourists.

### Who is your main tourism demographic & what products are being offered?

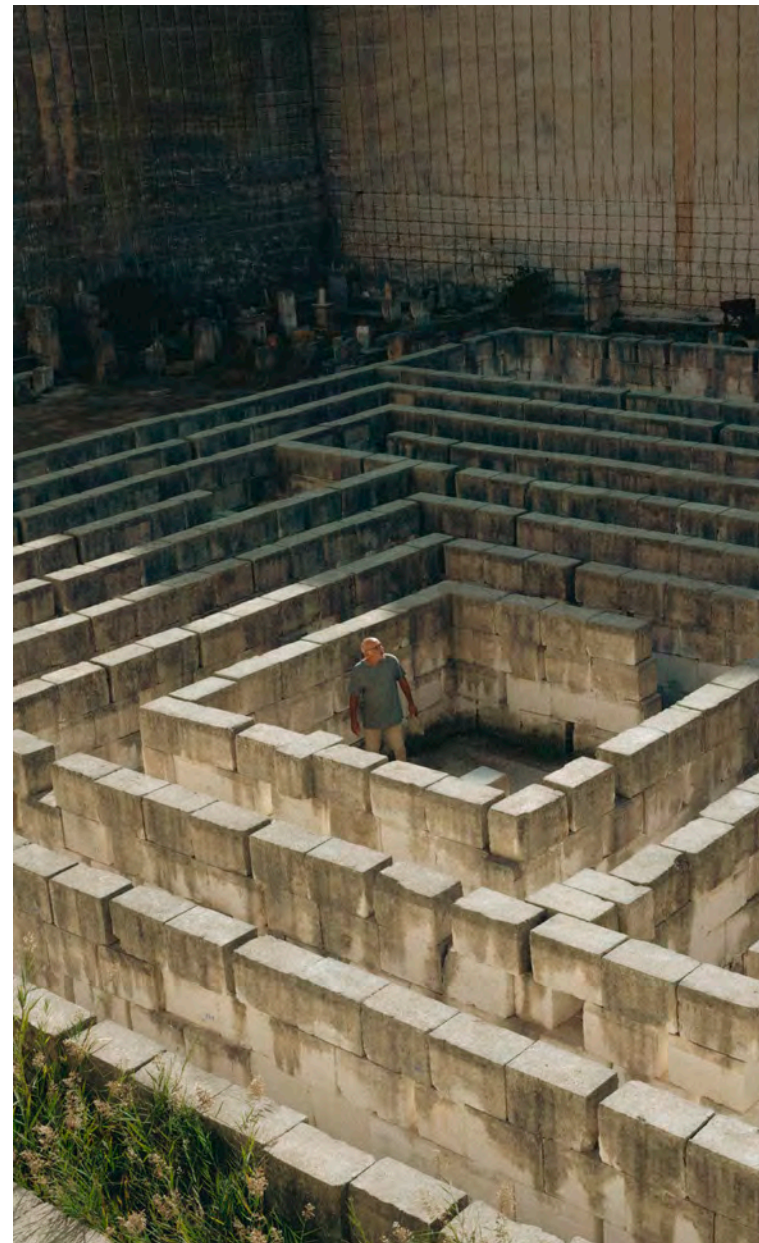
Menorca offers a unique family-friendly holiday experience that goes beyond the typical beach resort. While beautiful beaches and a focus on environmental conservation create a relaxing atmosphere, the island is actively extending its appeal to attract visitors year-round. Previously, Menorca had a shorter tourist season compared to other islands. However, a collaborative effort between the public and private sectors is changing this. Hotels are now opening earlier and staying open later in the year, extending the season to nine months. Improved air connectivity with major European and Spanish cities further supports this goal. Spanish tourists make up the majority of visitors, followed by a long-established British market. The French market is experiencing significant growth, and efforts are underway to attract more German tourists by highlighting Menorca's distinct environmental strengths and diverse activities. Menorca is a paradise for active travelers. The star attraction is the Camí de Cavalls, a 185-kilometer coastal path perfect for hiking, cycling, or horseback riding. It winds through charming villages, pristine beaches, and lush forests, offering breathtaking scenery and a connection with nature.

### How is Menorca working on diversifying sport & nautical tourism?

We are currently working on several projects to upgrade our sports facilities and create new attractions tailored for athletes and sports fans. One of our main focuses is refreshing the facilities at Mahón Port. Whether it is for canoeing enthusiasts attracted by the climate and location of the port, or professional athletes seeking top-notch facilities, we want to offer an inviting space for all. As part of our investment plan, we are also planning to build a new athletic track. This will provide both elite athletes and locals with access to high-quality facilities. Cycling, as always, is an important part of our sport tourism package. Thanks to our climate, it is available outdoors all year round to people of all ages.

### How important is being the home to a UNESCO World Heritage Site to the cultural tourism in Menorca? What other cultural offerings are there?

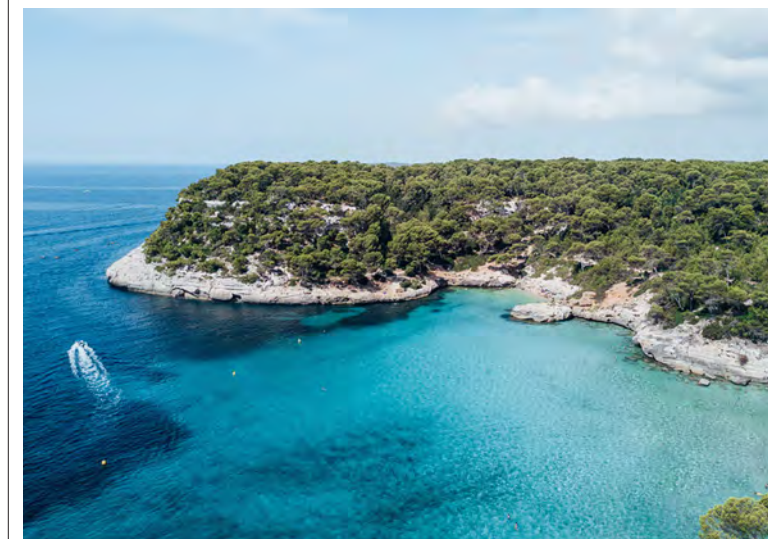
Being a UNESCO World Heritage Site is something we are very



proud of, especially our prehistoric "Talayotic Menorca" sites. As of today, Menorca boasts over 1,500 archaeological remains, with a focus on integration with the landscape, as emphasized by UNESCO. The Talayotic culture, spanning from 3500 BC to the Roman era, has many megalithic structures like talayots and taulas, some showing astronomical alignments. Apart from these historic sites, we have more contemporary cultural offerings. We have the Lazareto, once a quarantine facility and now a venue for events and tourism. Additionally, the Isla del Rey features a restored English military hospital, now home to the Hauser & Wirth Museum of contemporary art. Gastronomy is also part of our identity, with a focus on local products and traditions. The commitment to zero-kilometer products in restaurants reflects both preservation and innovation, with a high standard of quality. This is particularly notable in our meats from Menorca's indigenous red cows and local cheeses.

### What would your final message be to the readers of FORBES?

Visiting Menorca promises a rich cultural experience with its array of museums and vibrant music scene. We have the L'ÒAC, Museum of Contemporary Art, featuring works by artists like Antoni Tàpies and Marina Abramović. At the Museum of Menorca, visitors can explore our island's history from prehistoric times to the present, including the unique English period exhibition. We also have the oldest opera house in Spain, hosting leading opera singers during the opera season. Classical, jazz, and modern music events, along with festivals like the Lazareto Festival and Gran Festival de Música Alternativa, offer diverse musical experiences. With its distinct cultural offerings, rich history, and natural beauty, Menorca is excited to share its charm with the whole world. ●







## ARTAL MAYANS

Councilor of Tourism, Formentera

Formentera, where our identity is connected to the environment. Formentera is not primarily known for industry; rather, it is defined by its natural beauty. Our strict building regulations reflect this commitment to preservation. However, we must also consider the distribution of wealth. For instance, while Formentera boasts minimal urbanization and strict building codes, it faces challenges related to housing affordability and the equitable distribution of resources. We are aware that we live in a privileged and highly sought-after place, but not everyone can live here due to logistical and supply constraints. It is a challenge for society to set priorities that ensure residents have the opportunity to build a life on the island while also defending the rights to private property and free competition.

### Who is the main tourism market for the island & what are the main products offered?

Formentera's charm extends beyond a single tourist market. During the busy summer, visitors primarily from Italy, Germany, and Spain join a diverse temporary population seeking relaxation on the island's famous beaches. However, Formentera offers more than just an escape to its breathtaking, pristine beaches with crystal-clear waters. The island transforms in the off-seasons, attracting food lovers, nature enthusiasts, sports fans, and those seeking tranquility in a paradisiacal setting. Often traveling in couples or groups of friends, but also solo, visitors explore the island's beauty by bike or scooter in mild weather. Families with young children also find a haven here, enjoying the safe beaches and opportunities for exploration in a place with virtually no crime and no dangerous animals or plants. Contrary to what one might expect, Formentera remains surprisingly relaxed. Despite the increase in residents and visitors, our roads are not congested like those in big cities. This goes beyond typical tourist products: Formentera's hidden coves and nature reserves for adventurous exploration, a delicious local cuisine based on fresh seafood, rice dishes, and "peix sec" salads that amaze everyone who tries them. The island's fauna includes charming lizards that range from emerald green to turquoise blue during the day and dormice at night. All this is complemented by a commitment to sustainable practices that ensure a positive experience for visitors.

### How does Formentera sustain its approach to green tourism & ensure long-term environmental conservation?

We must lead by example, embodying sustainable practices on our island. Formentera boasts Spain's highest rate of potable water utilization, around 90%, and is a trailblazer in recycling.



The island is also ahead of the curve with its vehicle limitation measures. These measures require further consistency, and we are currently working on determining where more vehicle cutbacks are necessary. However, limiting vehicles also means limiting the influx of people, and therefore solutions are being studied to combat day visits that do not include overnight stays on the island and whose ecological footprint is comparatively larger. Our environment is our most precious asset, and preserving it sets us apart from other destinations. Real sustainability means safeguarding our island's beauty for future generations, including promoting clean energy adoption. In Formentera, solar and wind energy are thriving. Installing solar panels and mini wind turbines aligns with our commitment to sustainability and positions us for long-term energy independence, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. With the integration of renewable energy, we will also be better prepared for challenges such as fluctuations or difficulties in energy supply prices caused by international disasters, accidents, pandemics or potential international conflicts; which shows the importance of self-sufficiency necessary for island living, and is an opportunity to show our resilience and forward-thinking.

### How are you diversifying the tourism products offered?

We are looking to diversify both cultural and sports offerings



by promoting not only musical activities in the squares, such as festivals, events, and parties; but also sporting events. The Balearic Government is also pushing these products throughout all of the islands, and we are working closely with them to ensure we are diversifying our island to the best of our abilities. We have collectively considered promoting a healthy lifestyle as a form of tourism. Anyone interested in cycling or running is welcome to participate. A good example of this is a new race which is set for October 2024. It is a 15-kilometer twilight run, starting from Pujol, winding through Sant Ferran, Sant Francesc, La Savina, and culminating at Illetes, just as the sun sets—an experience we anticipate to be truly breathtaking. Additionally, there is a shorter 5-kilometer option for those seeking a less strenuous challenge, providing an immersive sports experience for all skill levels. From photography contests to wine tastings, we offer a diverse array of events that enrich the experience of our visitors without compromising our island's integrity. We are organizing stargazing expeditions by leveraging our Starlight certification, which is becoming increasingly popular. All of these initiatives resonate well with the German-speaking public. In fact, our Starlight brochures fly off the shelves at fairs—an indication of their widespread appeal.

### What would your final message be to readers of FORBES?

Formentera is a destination that does not disappoint. In fact, most visitors return year after year, extending their stay as long as possible, which is an indicator that something is going well, especially in a destination as small as our island. The commitment to visitors and our connection with tourism are well known by all residents, who strive to offer the best experiences to our tourists. By prioritizing sustainable practices and responsible tourism, the island can flourish without sacrificing its natural beauty and unique charm. This commitment extends to urban planning, renewable energy utilization, waste reduction, and responsible development. Formentera can serve as a model for sustainable tourism destinations worldwide. This path paves the way for a thriving economy that benefits both residents and visitors for generations to come. ●

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN FORMENTERA

### Progress with Environmental Stewardship

#### How has the recent change in leadership in Formentera influenced economic development & social welfare, particularly in relation to tourism?

The policies and priorities set forth by the new leadership in Formentera carry important implications for the economic prosperity and social well-being of our island. Each decision made, particularly those concerning tourism and housing, plays a significant role in the local economy and influences the daily lives of residents. Every initiative aimed at attracting visitors must be meticulously crafted to ensure sustainable development that nurtures not only economic growth but also environmental preservation and social cohesion. Tourism serves as a cornerstone of Formentera's economy, driving revenue streams and providing employment opportunities. However, this vital industry must be managed thoughtfully to prevent overexploitation of our natural resources and to maintain the authenticity of our island's charm. By prioritizing sustainable tourism practices, such as promoting eco-friendly accommodations and supporting locally-owned businesses, the government endeavors to preserve the unique allure of Formentera while fostering responsible tourism that benefits both visitors and residents alike.

#### How does urban planning & housing contribute to the sustainability of tourism?

From an urban planning standpoint, decision-making regarding when and where to build is crucial, particularly in locations like





## VICENTE MARÍ TORRES

President, Insular Council of Ibiza  
Councilor for Tourism Promotion, Rural  
& Marine Environment

the Phoenicians and Carthaginians to the Romans and Moors—all leaving indelible imprints upon this island. Naturally, we want to showcase this heritage, proudly bearing the UNESCO World Heritage Site status with landmarks like the old town of Vila and the Renaissance walls of our ancient city. This year, we are unveiling a groundbreaking initiative—the Environmental Mobilization and Interpretation Center—inviting visitors to explore our UNESCO World Heritage Site and the invaluable marine ecosystem surrounding Ibiza, including the Posidonia meadows that serve as nature’s CO2 to oxygen converters, rendering our waters pristine and transparent.

### How is Ibiza working towards extending tourism beyond peak season & what is the key demographic you are looking for in this extended period?

“Deseasonalization” - prolonging the tourist season outside of the summer months - is one of our main goals. We are already making significant strides, with our main season extending beyond seven months, facilitated by direct links to various destinations including London, the Netherlands, and across Germany. We are particularly interested in increasing the number of flight connections, especially with Germany and Austria. With consistent year-round access, we anticipate a surge in German-speaking tourists, many of whom traditionally favor Mallorca but will now view Ibiza as a preferred destination. This objective is central to our tourism promotion strategy, with this market holding utmost importance to us. Recent engagements with various aviation companies have paved the way for upcoming discussions aimed at expanding existing routes, such as the one with Düsseldorf, to encompass additional



## IBIZA’S TOURISM RENAISSANCE

### Sustainable Strategies Redefining Island’s Identity

#### What strategic measures is Ibiza implementing to transition from mass tourism to quality & responsible tourism?

Ibiza has been working on elevating the level of both tourists and tourist products available. We no longer prioritize mass tourism and sun-and-beach enthusiasts. Instead, our focus now lies on catering to discerning travelers seeking authentic experiences. We are looking for visitors to explore Ibiza’s natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, as well as enjoy the diverse leisure activities the island offers. Here, they discover an easily accessible haven from any European capital—a gem nestled in the Mediterranean. Our vision for the future is anchored in sustainability across all fronts—social, economic, and environmental. We aspire to set the standard in responsible tourism and with a legacy of 50 years reliant on tourism, we aim to sustainably thrive for many more decades. This entails managing tourist influx to prevent seasonal overcrowding and ensure Ibiza remains a year-round destination worth exploring.

#### What makes the island stand out and be seen as more than just sun & sea tourism?

Ibiza boasts a rich history spanning many civilizations—from



European and German cities, ensuring accessibility throughout the year, beyond the confines of peak summer months. We have sport offers throughout the whole year, and this helps to diversify our tourism. During Easter, we host the Mediterranean’s most significant offshore regatta, the “Ruta de la Sal.” It is a renowned event drawing nautical enthusiasts from all over. Plus, we have cycling tours, marathons, and MTB races. These events are not just for competition but also for enjoying the island. We believe promoting sports and culture is key to showcasing Ibiza. And while we are active in various markets, our primary focus remains conserving the island.

#### How is the change in infrastructure & public transport helping the sustainability goals of the island?

We currently have a new public transport concession in progress, where we will increase frequencies and routes, making it easier for both residents and visitors to get around Ibiza. It is a significant economic effort, but necessary to regulate vehicle influx, preventing road congestion and protecting natural areas. We are also pushing for legislation to regulate vehicle arrivals during peak times, notably in July and August, to avoid traffic congestion. This effort is complemented by improving public transportation, ensuring easy travel across the island’s five municipalities. Locals should view tourists as friends. Our aim is mutual respect, where tourists respect our island, and we provide quality service in return. Quality is not just about luxury; it is about hospitality, kindness, and excellent service. The best tourists are those who, within their means, visit Ibiza, stay in any of our accommodations, and respect our environment. This shift towards sustainable tourism is a collaborative effort between the private and public sectors, focusing on improving public services and infrastructure to meet the island’s needs. It is a long-term plan to ensure Ibiza remains a welcoming and sustainable destination for years to come.

#### What would your final message be to the readers of FORBES?

While Ibiza is renowned for its vibrant nightlife, it also caters to families and culture enthusiasts, boasting an eclectic culinary scene featuring locally sourced produce—such as wine and oil—cultivated with techniques inherited from the Phoenicians. These zero-kilometer products are just a glimpse into our commitment to sustainability and the relationship we cultivate between tourism and agriculture. By supporting local farmers and fishermen, we not only promote agriculture and fishing but also safeguard our unique landscape. Ibiza is a destination for everyone—from solo travelers to couples and families—offering a wealth of experiences amidst our breathtaking natural backdrop and pristine beaches. Contrary to popular belief, Ibiza transcends its party reputation, embodying the essence of “All the Islands in One.” Visiting Ibiza encapsulates a journey through many experiences, offering a slice of the world within our shores, no matter the time of year. ●







## IBIZA’S EVOLUTION: EXUBERANT ENERGY & LUXURY

Ibiza, long celebrated for its nightlife and energetic atmosphere, is undergoing a significant transformation. Historically a magnet for partygoers and sun-and-beach enthusiasts, the island is now attracting a new wave of discerning travelers seeking authentic and high-end experiences. This shift is redefining Ibiza’s identity, expanding its appeal to those in search of luxury and exclusivity. Boutique hotels like W Ibiza and Nobu Hotel exemplify this transformation. Situated in tranquil areas such as Santa Eulalia and Talamanca Bay, these hotels offer top-notch services and amenities. Guests can indulge in deluxe spa treatments, spacious rooms with breathtaking views, and exclusive activities like catamaran rentals or private yacht charters. A key indicator of this change is the island’s growing popularity among younger German-speaking tourists, who are increasingly choosing Ibiza over the traditionally-favored Mallorca. Strategic efforts to extend the main tourism season and improve infrastructure have played a pivotal role in attracting this new demographic. The island’s airport now offers more direct flights from cities like Berlin and Munich, and new roads have improved access to less-explored parts of the island. Ibiza’s commitment to extending the tourist season beyond the summer months has been instrumental in attracting high-end visitors. Enhanced accessibility from major European cities and a focus on diverse activities

beyond nightlife have positioned Ibiza as a top choice. These travelers seek exclusive experiences amid the island’s natural beauty and cultural heritage. Guests can enjoy guided hiking tours through Ibiza’s countryside and private boat trips to secluded beaches or visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Dalt Vila in Ibiza Town, which showcases stunning Renaissance military architecture, with cobblestone streets, ancient walls, and fortresses to explore. Ibiza’s reputation as the clubbing capital of the world remains intact, but with an elevated twist. Renowned clubs provide exclusive party experiences that attract

celebrities and influential figures, offering energetic dancing, premium drinks, and performances by world-famous DJs. Pacha’s VIP sections are often frequented by international stars, and Lio offers a dinner show that combines fine dining with live performances, creating a multifaceted nightlife experience. “While Ibiza is renowned for its vibrant nightlife, it also boasts an eclectic culinary scene featuring locally sourced produce—such as wine and oil—cultivated with techniques inherited from the Phoenicians,” shared President Vicente Marí Torres. SubliMotion, famously known as the world’s most expensive restaurant, offers a one-of-a-kind dining experience that blends culinary art with immersive theater. Additionally, The View at the Seven Pines Resort provides a cliffside dining experience, overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Local markets, like the Mercat Vell in Ibiza Town, also offer gourmet food tours that explore the island’s rich culinary heritage. Ibiza is still very much a party island, but the parties have gone high-end. The island is successfully balancing its traditional roots with its new identity, ensuring it remains a premier destination. From boutique hotels and exclusive clubs to fine dining and breathtaking natural attractions, Ibiza is proving that it can cater to both its traditional crowd and a new wave of guests. ●



# FACES OF CHANGE

The Leaders Impacting Tourism in the Balearic Islands



**BORJA GARCÍA**  
Director, St. Regis Mardavall  
Mallorca Resort

**What are the core values that guide the resort’s operations?**  
We are part of the Marriott group, one of its 31 distinguished brands. Our primary focus is on providing a luxurious and traditional hotel experience, offering guests a sanctuary of peace enriched with touches of elegance, art, and culture. We prioritize guest comfort and offer a diverse range of experiences beyond mere relaxation, including fine dining, engaging family activities, and an expansive spa. Our clientele includes a significant German and Austrian demographic, supported by our close ties and cultural touches. We aim to maintain and expand this market. We facilitate easy travel and ensure guests feel at home, offering unique experiences like our evening champagne ritual and children’s reading programs. We invite visitors to experience our hotel, enjoy our exceptional hospitality, and create cherished memories for years to come. We are committed to making every stay memorable and look forward to welcoming guests from all over the globe.



**ANDREU GENESTRA**  
Chef

**How do you perceive the role of cuisine in Mallorcan culture?**  
Currently, we are primarily associated with iconic products such as ensaimada, sobrasada, and olive oil. However, Mallorcan wine remains relatively unknown in Spain, despite the island boasting over 100 wineries. The extensive range of local products we offer is truly incredible. We have recipes that showcase local vegetables, seafood, and game. It is rare for other regions to match the diversity and richness of our offerings. Furthermore, Mallorca benefits from a unique microclimate in the Mediterranean, enhancing our agricultural diversity. This abundance contributes to an extraordinary wealth, not only in terms of products but also in tradition and culture. Our island has been influenced by many civilizations: Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, Muslims, and later the Christians with the Crown of Aragon. Each of these cultures has left an indelible mark on our cuisine, enriching it with their unique flavors and techniques.



**TOMAS LOPEZ**  
Director, Hotel Posada Terra  
Santa

**Could you elaborate on the goals behind the recent renovation at Posada Terra Santa, particularly in light of its 10th anniversary?**  
Posada Terra Santa, a hotel established in 2014, was founded by a Spanish couple, one from Granada and the other from Zaragoza, both with a strong connection to Mallorca. They sought a property for their project and discovered a 15th-century building in the old town. Now part of the Hideaway Hotels group, which specializes in hidden urban properties, the hotel underwent renovation by Rodwell, a New York-based interior design group. With 26 rooms, a spa, and a Mediterranean restaurant emphasizing local, honest cuisine, the hotel aims to offer guests a tranquil, authentic experience. It is positioned to complement Palma’s cultural and gastronomic offerings, catering to interests such as golfing and cycling. The favorable winter weather boosts off-season activities. The hotel’s commercial focus emphasizes a Mediterranean ambiance, with personalized, local experiences recommended by a knowledgeable concierge team.





# FACES OF CHANGE

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**TONI SALOM**  
CEO, Nautipaints

## Could you share the journey and key milestones of NautiPaints?

As CEO of Group and president of the Balearic Marine Cluster, I oversee a company with a 53-year legacy. Founded by my father in 1971, we began by producing naval equipment for local fishermen before pivoting to yacht repair as Mallorca became a Mediterranean hub. In 1997, we established our yacht finishing division, marking a pivotal growth moment. Despite the 2008 crisis, our strong financial position and strategic planning enabled us to thrive. Further expansion came in 2014 with the acquisition of a tank blasting company. Today, with Europe's largest nautical painting workshop, we continue to invest in infrastructure to meet evolving industry standards. Our commitment to quality and proprietary standards has reshaped client expectations, driving our ongoing expansion across Spain.



**OTHMAN KTIRI**  
Chairman, OK Group

## What is the long-term vision of the OK Group?

The OK Group, through its flagship company OkMobility, has achieved successful diversification. OkMobility played a crucial role in securing funds and investing in new sectors such as real estate, venture capital, and catering. The vision for 2030 includes global expansion in mobility, aiming to operate in more than 30 countries. The goal is to maintain profitability as the foundation for sustainable growth, guided by the mission of "Moving People, Powering Freedom." Furthermore, the diversification initiatives are expected to consolidate, generating a positive societal impact. The associated foundation is also projected to expand its reach, aiding more people globally. This business vision aligns with a commitment to creating significant social change.



**JOSÉ MARÍA CAMPUZANO**  
Managing Director, IPM Group

## Tell us more about the evolution of IPM Group & what is its approach towards sustainability?

IPM GROUP, established in the 1990s in Mallorca, specializes in constructing and managing prestigious marinas and boatyards globally, including STP Shipyard Palma, Marina Ibiza, and Marina Port de Mallorca. Looking to 2030, IPM GROUP aims to sustain service excellence by optimizing processes, enhancing service quality and safety standards, and innovating with new technologies to surpass customer expectations. We are committed to minimizing marine environmental impact and promoting eco-friendly practices across our facilities and stakeholders. Initiatives include electric vehicle charging stations, renewable energy adoption, transitioning machinery to electric alternatives, and fostering circular economy practices through local NGO partnerships.

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**MANU FRAGA**  
Director, La Copa del Rey MAPFRE Regatta

## What factors have contributed to the evolution & global recognition of this regatta as a premier sailing event?

Originally conceived in the 1980s to establish Palma as the hub of Mediterranean sailing, the regatta has seen steady growth over the decades. The entry of the Puig family marked a pivotal moment, expanding the Copa de Río Brava's international footprint. Subsequently, the club assumed a leading role, notably from 2005 to 2010, further solidifying the event's stature, professionalism, and global appeal. Moreover, the Copa del Rey has played a significant role in promoting the island on a global scale, positioning it as a premier sailing destination. With its exceptional weather conditions and modern nautical infrastructure, Mallorca distinguishes itself as one of the world's foremost nautical hubs. Our extensive season offers events throughout the year, meticulously organized by the Palma Nautical Club.



**CHEMA SANS**  
Director, Palma International Boat Show

## What role has the boat show played in the development & promotion of the nautical sector?

The nautical fair has played a pivotal role in fostering professional teams and providing robust promotional opportunities. Supported by the IDI, the fair is not only a key platform for tourism but also a catalyst for sectoral promotion. This longstanding public-private partnership has evolved into a comprehensive strategy aimed at bolstering the nautical sector, attracting businesses, and stimulating local economic growth. The fair's significance extends beyond local borders, facilitating the internationalization of local companies while maintaining a steadfast focus despite sectoral challenges. Its impact is evident in the influx of new businesses choosing to establish roots in the Balearic Islands, contributing to the nautical sector and elevating regional competitiveness. This diversification highlights the fair's role in expanding the economic landscape beyond traditional tourism.





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**TOMÁS MELGAR NOGUERA**

Director, Palma de Mallorca Airport

## What details can you share about the renovation of Palma Airport?

The airport is currently undergoing extensive renovations to manage its high summer passenger traffic, which can peak at a million passengers weekly. Despite being the third largest airport in Spain's AENA network, it consistently ranks among the busiest in terms of passenger and aircraft volume. The renovation project encompasses several key elements. The main building is being refurbished to improve functionality and passenger comfort, while the expansion of the pier will increase the number of aircraft contact positions, reducing congestion and enhancing operational efficiency. Another pivotal aspect of the renovation is the implementation of advanced technologies. Upgraded security systems will expedite screening procedures, eliminating the requirement for passengers to remove liquids and electronic devices. This initiative is designed to streamline the entire security process, ultimately enhancing passenger convenience and satisfaction.



**JAIME MARTÍNEZ LLABRÉS**

Mayor, Palma de Mallorca

## How is Palma de Mallorca adapting to growth while enhancing its cultural & environmental sustainability?

Palma de Mallorca, home to nearly 500,000 residents, has experienced significant population growth, increasing by approximately 100,000 over the past two decades. This demographic shift has brought about greater cultural diversity and a heightened focus on enhancing public services, including cleanliness, safety, transportation, and housing. The city is committed to sustainability and innovation, with ambitious plans to decarbonize the marina and achieve energy self-sufficiency. Major urban renewal projects are underway, including the restoration of iconic landmarks like the Gesa Building, the establishment of cultural centers such as the Municipal Institute of Arts, and the creation of green spaces like the metropolitan forest. Palma aspires to position itself as a cultural capital of Europe, leveraging its rich historical heritage and excellent connectivity to provide a vibrant experience for both residents and visitors.



**SANDRA LIPSKI**

Director, Mallorca International Film Festival

## Can you please tell us about the evolution of MIFF?

The festival started in 2012 out of a desire to showcase our own movies and celebrate cinema in Mallorca. Despite the initial lack of expertise, the first edition was a success. Over the years, it is been amazing to notice the involvement of renowned figures like Danny DeVito, Melissa Leo, Mads Mikkelsen and Ruben Östlund. Notably, the festival's location in Mallorca has become a significant draw, attracting filmmakers and distributors who appreciate its unique atmosphere. It is a platform for both international and Balearic cinema. The festival's "Made in Balears" section, celebrating its tenth anniversary last year, showcases local talent and has seen significant growth. Balearic filmmakers like Jaume Carrió and Toni Bestard have gained recognition, including a Goya award for Carrió's animation. Looking ahead, we envision initiatives like a Film Financing Forum to connect filmmakers with investors, strengthening the festival's role as a bridge between Balearic and international cinema.

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**ISABEL TERUEL**

Operation Manager, Port Adriano

## What role does Port Adriano in Mallorca play in its local community & the broader tourism & sustainability landscape?

Port Adriano, a marina in Mallorca, evolved from the El Toro Sports Port in 1992. In 2012, it expanded without encroaching on the coast, now accommodating boats up to 80 meters, catering to a diverse clientele. Economically, it supports Mallorca's tourism by attracting high-spending visitors while fostering environmental responsibility. Technologically, it embraces innovations like mobile-operated barriers and cybersecurity measures, though some initiatives, such as wave energy, await feasibility. Adaptation to nautical tourism trends post-COVID includes increased boat rentals and the rise of electric vessels, supported by corresponding charging infrastructure. Port Adriano offers investment opportunities and champions blue economy projects, emphasizing sustainability through solar panels, geothermal systems, desalination, and biodiversity enhancement.



**CORINNA GRAF**

Managing Director, Puerto Portals

## How has Puerto Portals evolved since its founding, & what are its long-term goals?

The history of Puerto Portals dates back to 1981 when it was founded in response to the lack of services in ports at the time. Its inauguration in 1986 marked a milestone by offering not only shelter for boats but also commercial premises, terraces, and gardens, pioneering in its customer-centric approach. Since then, it has been renowned for high-level social, sports, and gastronomic events, attracting renowned visitors. The long-term vision is to consolidate its international reputation as one of the leading ports in the Mediterranean while leading in environmental sustainability. The goal is to inspire other nautical communities towards more responsible practices, positioning Puerto Portals as a benchmark in marine environment protection and the promotion of the blue economy.



**MAR VERA VIVES**

Deputy Manager, Port Alcudiamar

## How did Alcudiamar became one of the prominent ports in Mallorca?

The Club de Mar de Alcudia, founded about 30 years ago, has evolved into the main sports port in the area, offering 745 moorings for boats ranging from 6 to 30 meters in length. Its history dates back to the need of local sailors to access their boats, which led to the creation of the company. Today, the club focuses on sustainability and innovation, with a pending project to decarbonize the entire marina and become energy self-sufficient through renewable sources. Despite the challenges, they remain committed to this goal. Additionally, they have implemented innovative technologies such as recirculation and oxygenation systems and have contributed to research projects like water bioremediation. Digitalization has also improved the club's efficiency, reducing water and electricity waste, and optimizing its daily operations.





**Melinda Snider**  
Managing Director

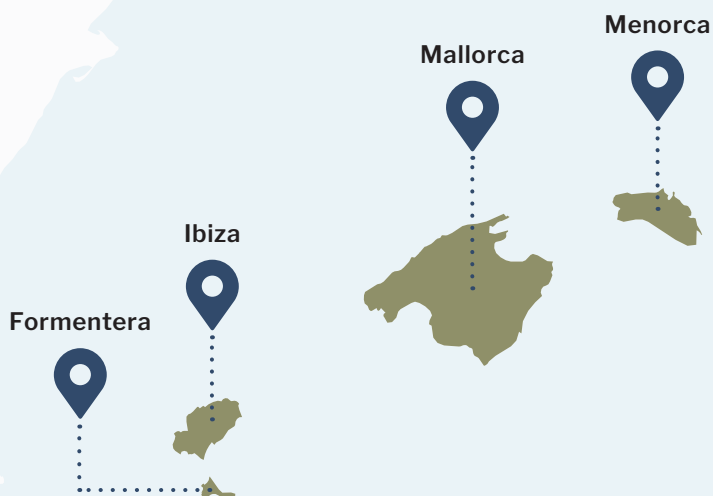
**Laetitia Saint Maur**  
Development Director

**Abigail Simpson**  
Production Manager

**Íñigo López González**  
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**Paulo Couto**  
Creative Director

SPAIN



MEDITERRANEAN SEA

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