

Mini Guide Mallorca

If you have chosen Mallorca as your holiday destination, you certainly won't regret your choice. Our main advice is for you not to be only satisfied with visiting the area surrounding your Hotel, because you will be missing many important sites to see in the island. This is our list of 10 things you should definitely see or do:

1.- The Cathedral: Mallorca Cathedral or *La Seu* is located in the central area of Palma's old quarter, and on the bank of its bay. This privileged location helps enhance its majesty.

The origins of this 6,600 m² building dates from the XIV century when James I, after conquering the Muslims in Mallorca in 1229, ordered its construction on the great mosque of Medina Mayurca as a temple of Christian worship and dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

It took two centuries to build it although it has gone through continuous refurbishments and changes even to this day. Because of this constant transformation the cathedral has incorporated all kinds of architectonic styles throughout its seven centuries of existence: Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Neo-classic, Modern and Contemporary. The resulting unit has unequal harmony and beauty.



Next to the Cathedral we find the **Almudania Royal Palace**.

2.- Palma: It's the capital of the island and the whole Balearic archipelago consisting of the islands of Mallorca, Minorca, Cabrera, Ibiza and Formentera. The Romans founded this city in 123 BC after being conquered. It is believed that its name refers to their victory, symbolised by the palm of the hand. It is a very common mistake to call the whole island Palma de Mallorca. This denomination only refers to its capital, and the correct way is to say Palma (without saying "de Mallorca"). In this pretty city we see the combination of historical and cultural value areas mixed with modern buildings which, thanks to tourism, make Palma into a very cosmopolitan city. We advise you to spend at least one day in the area, which will not be enough to see everything but will give you a general panorama if you cannot stay longer.

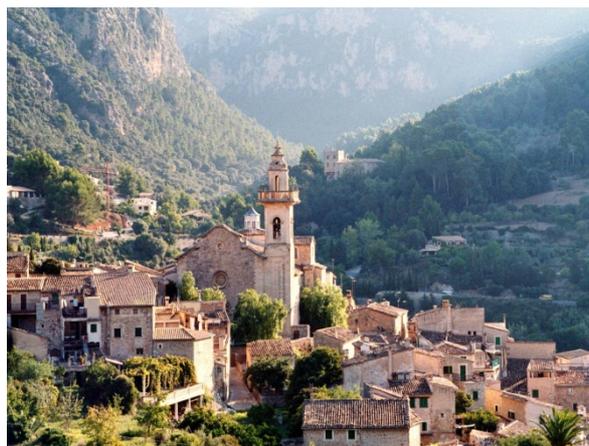


This is our proposed route: Park the car in **S'Hort del rei** (at the base of the Cathedral. From the airport you can get here by following the sea, before arriving to Paseo Marítimo). Going up **Conquistador Street** you will get to **Plaza de Cort**, this is where the **Ayuntamiento** (city hall) is. There is another square next to this one, **Plaza Santa Eulalia**, and through it you will arrive at **Morey Street**, with one of the best stately homes and patios of the city; at the end of Morey Street, you'll see the **Cathedral**. From there, going through the Arab baths you can get carried away and wander the narrow streets which constitute the old quarter of the city until you go back to **Plaza Santa Eulalia** again and then take **Colon**

Street and arrive at **Plaza Mayor** (Main Square). At the Main Square you can take the stairs going down to **Las Ramblas** (a pedestrian street full of flower stands) going through them and leaving the Main Square behind. At the end of Las Ramblas to the left, take **San Jaime Street** (if you have a look on the right you'll see a typical Mallorcan oven on the corner) and you will get to **Rey Juan Carlos I Square** and **Paseo del Borne** (coming from San Jaime street to the right of Juan Carlos I Square you have **Jaime III Street**. This street, together with Paseo del Borne, is one of the main commercial areas in town). Going through Paseo del Borne you will arrive to **Plaza de la Reina** and **Antoni Maura Avenue**. At this moment you will be next to the parking space where you left your car. We recommend, however, that you turn right and get close to **Lonja**, the old fish market. Its Gothic architecture and the fact that it is surrounded by many bars and restaurants makes it the perfect place to have lunch or dinner.

There are many other interesting sites in the city such as **Olivar Market** (mainly selling fruit, vegetables, meat and fish) or **Bellver Castle** (you can see it from the top of Paseo Marítimo): it's the only circular castle in Europe.

3.-Valldemossa and Deià: We think you shouldn't miss *Serra de Tramuntana* (declared a World Heritage Site in 2010 by UNESCO) which takes its name from the fact that it is located in the North East of the Island and thus protected from the cold winds of the North (the *tramontana*). In this case we recommend visiting two of its municipalities which, due to being close together, are ideal to dedicate one day of your holidays. In the municipalities of Valldemossa and Deià you will find several fountains surrounded by abundant and leafy vegetation, transmitting an extraordinary atmosphere of relaxation. Its narrow and cobbled streets enhance the charm of these places.



The **Monasterio de La Cartuja** in Valldemossa has its origins in the Palace king Jaime II of Mallorca ordered to be built at the beginning of the XIV century so that his son Sancho would find some relief from his asthma. Once the Mallorcan dynasty reached its end, the Palace fell into disuse and was given to the Monks to turn it into Cartuja. For over 4 centuries the Cartujan Monks dwelled in Cartuja until they were evicted from it in 1834, and the building shifted into private hands. It was during 1838 when Chopin travelled to Mallorca accompanied by writer George Sand and rented a cell in the monastery when he composed some works and George Sand wrote the famous book "A Winter in Mallorca" where he criticises the traditions and customs of the people of Malloca. The monastery has taken in many illustrious people such as Rubén Darío, Melchor Gaspar de Jovellanos, Santiago Rusiñol or the archduke of Austria, Lluís Salvador, among others.

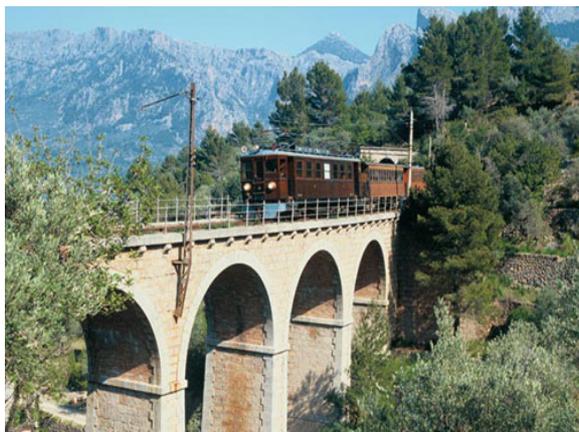
The "cocas de patata" (a traditional local candy) are ideal to eat with ice-cream in summer or hot chocolate in winter. They are offered in any café or they can be bought at any bakery.

On the way to Deià you can also visit **Ermita de Valldemossa**, where a small community of Mallorcan hermits dedicate their lives to prayer and penitence.

In **Deià** you cannot miss a visit to its colourful **port**; and if you are feeling up for a half-an-hour walk, you can end your day with a relaxing bath in its cove. Even though it's distant, it's usually crowded, especially during July and August.

If you have enjoyed this visit, another town worth mentioning is **Estellencs**.

4.-Soller and Puerto de Soller: Just a walk around the town and its port turns into a fascinating experience. With 13,000 inhabitants, Sóller is Sierra de Tramuntana's commercial and cultural centre, as well as the starting point of many trekking paths through the mountains, the seaside and the beautiful "valle de los naranjos" (orange tree valley). The main square with its impressive church, trees, cafés and the mountains as background makes this place as one of the best in the Island. Surrounded by narrow streets and many shops, traditional houses and the old train station, the meeting point for locals and tourists, especially when the market is open (Saturday). Apart from enjoying the landscape and the atmosphere, in the Port you'll be able to have a swim or board the ship heading to Torrent de Pareis.



It is advised to take the Palma-Soller train (opened in 1912). It is a unique experience that you won't regret. The trip will take you about 55 minutes. Although you can also take the train at other stations nearer Soller, during the busiest seasons (July and August), it is a better option to board it in Palma to ensure a seat. We think it's worth enjoying the landscape while being as comfortable as possible.

If you decide to travel by car, you will have to go through the only paid tunnel in the island, but still a better option than taking the alternative road. Finally, we recommend its typical products:

prawns, oranges and olive oil. If you are still eager for more, there is another nearby pretty town: **Fornalutx**

5.-Pollensa and Formentor: Another advisable excursion to spend the whole day is to visit Pollensa and Cape Formentor located in the North of the island. Pollensa's main attraction lays in its diverse landscapes and its bay. Pollensa port is a fishing port packed with terraces and bars giving the place a particular feel. Sitting in any of them while contemplating the mountain and the ocean is a real luxury. Cape Formentor has high cliffs which sink into the Mediterranean, creating a stunning landscape. It is not an excessively long journey (19 km from the Port of Pollensa), but because of the curves and the narrow road, it is advisable to drive at a low speed, especially if this is your first time travelling there. This condition of the road may extend the trip for another 45 minutes, mainly during peak season, where there are more vehicles in transit or parked along the road. Once you have visited Cape Formentor, you cannot miss a swim in its beach (**Playa Formentor**).

As some of the area's attractions we can mention the Party of Moors and Christians where the locals play a big part.



6.- Alcudia: Nor far away from Pollensa we find the municipality of Alcudia of great historical and cultural value, as it is here that we have the remains of **the Roman city of Pollentia** (ancient name given to Alcudia that must not be confused with Pollensa) as well as two **wall areas**, **one medieval, the other one from the**

Renaissance. The large number of beaches are also worth mentioning: large, small, sand beaches, pebble beaches, etc. and **S'Albufera Natural Park** which can be visited (with prior permission, the tickets are free of charge). We advise not to leave the visit for the last minute, since the mosquitoes can become quite unpleasant.



7.-Fishing villages: Besides the above-mentioned towns (Deià, Puerto Pollensa, etc) we will mention the town of **CalaFiguera** and its municipality of Santany (not to be confused with CalaFiguera beach in Pollensa). It is a picturesque town consisting of two ravines which still preserve the fishermen's houses.



8.-Beaches: There are 207 beaches in Mallorca: 153 sand beaches, 13 gravel beaches, 21 rock beaches and 15 pebble beaches (rocks eroded by the sea). It is very difficult to recommend one beach, since it depends on personal taste or the needs of each person. But what we can state is

that there are beaches for all tastes, from long beaches with thin sand to distant coves you can only get to by foot or sailing.



9.-Gastronomy. Some of the most typical dishes from Mallorca are:

Frito: it has many variants. It's a mixture of certain vegetables, potatoes, spices and meat or fish, all fried in oil. We especially like the way this is cooked in the village of Sineu where all the ingredients are chopped very thinly. In addition, this town located in the heart of the Island opens a market each Wednesday morning; a great opportunity to purchase traditional home-made products (for example: *sobrasada*). We locals usually visit this market when we want to fill our shelves. Warning: frito made with meat usually includes some extra ingredient such as liver or blood. Although it is very tasty, we understand it can be shocking if you're not used to this type of food.

Soups: There are summer soups and winter soups. Their difference lies in the fact that they are made with different types of vegetables, depending on the season. They are served with very thin slices of hard bread (the *sopas*) and they usually also come with poached eggs. Exquisite!

Cocas: They have many variants, the main ones being vegetable coca and *trampó* (pepper and onion). It is like the dough used in pizzas with vegetables on top. They are often sold in portions in bakeries, so they are a good option to eat during mid-morning or in the afternoon.

Pork sausages (**sobrasada, camaiot and longaniza**): made in the

traditional *matances*, every part of the pig is used in some way. The most important products are the *sobrassada* (a reddish paste to spread on bread), the *camaiot* (sausage cut in loaches) and *longaniza* (like *sobrassada* but less cured). You cannot leave without trying it! If you really like it you can find shops where they sell these products properly packaged.



Ensaimada: the most famous and traditional pastry in Mallorca whose origin is not completely known. The main ingredient in the dough is *saimor* pork fat. The dough is shaped as a spiral, giving it its characteristic look. It can be *llisa* (without filling) or stuffed (with chocolate, *Cabell d'àngel* or cream). If you wish to take some home, you will also find places that will wrap them for your journey.

Tumbet: seasonal dish with aubergines, potatoes, spices and tomato sauce. Delicious.

Trampó: Very simple seasonal dish very successful among the locals. It's a simple salad with tomatoes, onions, white pepper, salt and olive oil. The secret is in the quality of the ingredients, especially tomatoes and olive oil. If the ingredients are just right, eating *trampó* can be a sublime experience.

There are sweet and sour dishes here, since the Mallorcan cuisine is very varied: pork loin with cabbages, *crespells*, apricots *coca*, stuffed aubergines, empanadas and *cocarrois* (during Holy Week), etc.

Of course, as in any seaside area in Spain, there are any seafood and fish options.

Other popular markets are Santa María or Felanitx (both on Sunday).

Regarding drinks, a typical liqueur, and herbs can be sweet, bittersweet or dry. Like most liqueurs here, they have a very strong taste and are only liked by those who are used to drinking them. We recommend the bittersweet ones with ice.

10.- Shopping:

Once more, the commercial area in Mallorca is just the same as in other major cities as far as shops or stores are concerned. Many big firms have opened their shops in the island taking advantage of the great amount of visitors we have throughout the year. In the capital, Palma, the main shopping areas are: The Avenues, Porto Pi Commercial Centre (at the end of Paseo Marítimo) and Jaime III Avenue, the latter being our favourite because of its location and for housing the most fashionable brands as well as the most popular and accessible. It is not only in Palma that you can go shopping. In some municipalities there are some very attractive and exclusive stores (for example, in some of the above-mentioned towns: Alcudia, Pollensa or Sóller).



Besides visiting the island to do some shopping, you can also acquire traditional products, and you will not be disappointed when looking for places to buy them: traditional leather products (Inca), wicker products or *llatra* (Son Servera), blown glass (you can visit many factories which exhibit the process) and textile goods (for example tablecloths).