

Mallorca Overview and Points of Interest



Mallorca (or Majorca) is the largest island in the Balearic Islands archipelago, in Spain. Mallorca is an island off the coast of Spain in the western Mediterranean sea, approximately 130 miles south of Barcelona, and 150 miles east of Valencia.



At 3,640 square kilometres, it is the largest island of the Balearic Islands (that include Ibiza, Menorca & Formentera), all of which are a part of Spain. Unusually for a Mediterranean island, Mallorca is fertile and green, with an amazing array of natural landscapes from soaring mountains in the west (the Tramuntana mountains), to beautiful vineyards in the fertile central plain, and of course, wonderful golden sand beaches along its coast.

Mallorca's population was 790,763 in 2006, 869,000 in 2012 and is continuing to increase.

The name Mallorca derives from Latin *insula maior*, "larger island"; later *Maiorica*, "the larger one" in comparison to Minorca, "the smaller one".

Like the other Balearic Islands of Minorca, Ibiza, and Formentera, the island is an extremely popular holiday destination, particularly for tourists from Germany, Ireland, Poland, the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, and the United Kingdom.

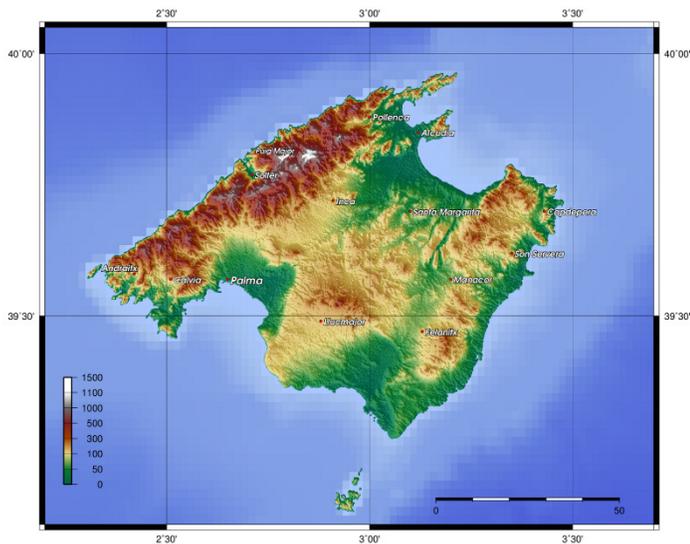


The capital of the island, Palma, is also the capital of the autonomous community of the Balearic Islands. The Cabrera Archipelago is administratively grouped with Majorca (in the municipality of Palma). The anthem of Majorca is *La Balanguera*.

Geology and Vegetation of Mallorca

The formation of the Balearic islands is estimated to have taken place around 150 million years ago. At first, Mallorca was joined to the Spanish peninsula as an underwater island before its present configuration came into being.

Majorca covers 1,405 square miles. Physically, the most prominent feature is the great range of mountains that runs parallel to the north-west coast for the whole length of the island. The range is moderately high, composed of jagged rocky peaks, of which one, Puig Mayor, almost in the centre, reaches a height of 4,645 feet. It forms a difficult barrier to communications, and has some effect on climate, sheltering the more southerly facing slopes from strong north-westerly winds.



Since many of the rocks are formed of limestone, there is little water on the surface, only a few streams making their way to the sea or to the central plains. South of this line of mountains lies an extensive central depression, reaching the sea in several large bays, notably those of Pollensa, Alcudia and Palma.

A little to the south of the island there are several hill masses, reaching no higher than 700 feet, but quite prominent since they rise somewhat abruptly above the general level of the land.

Little drainage of a permanent nature is to be found, but there are several *arroyas* or *torrentes*, which flow only after rainfall, and are dry for the greater part of the year. There are, however, good supplies of underground water, which is brought up by wind-

pump for irrigation, and which may be seen occasionally deep underground in one of the caves, such as the Gorch Blau, for which the island is justly famous.

There is a lagoon called Albufera on the north-east coast, behind the bay of Alcudia, into which several streams drain, and there are numerous small lakes, some associated with picturesque gorges and other features of karst scenery.

The Tramuntana mountains run up the western coast for around 90 km and the highest peak is Puig Major at 1445 metres. These mountains are a continuation of Betic mountain range on the Spanish mainland. The mountains become steeper the further north you go, and all along the coast, there are cliffs that drop dramatically into the sea.



Roads are sparse through the mountains and one of the best ways to appreciate the scenery is from the sea on a boat. The other way, of course is to get your walking boots on and hit the many hiking trails that run from village to village. Much of the area is protected and has been designated a UNESCO site. The steepness of the slopes make it difficult to farm the land, although some of it has been terraced which allows cultivation of olive trees and vines. These are two of Mallorca's main agricultural crops, along with citrus fruits (in particular oranges), almonds, grains and vegetables.

To the north east lies a smaller mountain range, the Llevant. You'll find much lower altitudes (around 500 metres) here but equally beautiful and rugged countryside. These hills extend southwards and get steadily lower, with only a couple of peaks reaching over 400 metres.

The Llevant Peninsula is found on the north east of Mallorca. This hilly terrain could almost pass for the Scottish highlands (on a good day!), with its covering of heathers and shrubs at the higher altitudes.

It was declared a National Park in 2002 and is renowned for its remote and unspoilt beaches, and its colonies of



Mediterranean tortoises.



You can drive through the reserve up a narrow road if you prefer not to walk, and the views from the top down on to the Bay of Alcudia are astounding. The road then drops down to a remote church, the Ermita de Betlem, just next to the coastline. A number of hiking trails start from here. Cap de Formentor offers views from about 385 metres above sea level.

Llevant Nature Reserve is also a popular destination for bird watching. Some of the land is privately owned and there is a visitor centre, again with hiking trails, on the road from Arta to the Ermita.

Much of Mallorca is made up from limestone. This type of rock dissolves over time in water and gives rise to gorges and the many cave systems found in the foothills of the mountainous regions. The same rock means there are very few lakes on Mallorca as water seeps through to form underground water systems. These basins provide water to the population. The scarcity of rainfall in Mallorca means that the water table is easily challenged and this is a limiting factor when considering further population development in Mallorca.

Caves d'Arta. If you only have time to visit one set of caves on the east coast, this is the one to see. These caves, near Arta in the north east of Mallorca are a fascinating network of underground caverns, whose weird stalactites and stalagmites conjure up mysterious images of Heaven and Hell. An early visitor was Jules Verne; the caves are said to have inspired his Journey to the Centre of the Earth.



Now that the caves are a sanitised tourist attraction, it is hard to imagine how French geologist Edouard Martel felt when he first stepped into them - dark, mysterious and terrifying - in 1876. In fact they had been known about for centuries. Jaime I found 2,000 Arabs hiding here with their cattle during the Christian conquest and they were later used by hermits, pirates and smugglers. But it was Martel who first studied and chronicled these grottoes, 46 metres above the sea at Cap Vermell, at the instigation of Archduke Ludwig Salvator.

The guided tour comes with special effects and the various chambers are given Dantesque names - Hell, Purgatory, Paradise. The descent into Hell is swiftly followed by a 'son et lumiere' display. Stalactites point down from the mouldy roof like daggers, somehow defying gravity. One of the chambers is as large as the nave of Palma Cathedral and the Queen of Pillars, a stalagmite 22m tall, could almost be a Gothic column. It is growing upwards at the rate of 2cm every 100 years, which means that in another 5,000 years or so it will be joined to the ceiling.

You emerge from the caves to a view of the sea, framed by the cavern entrance. Disabled visitors and those with limited mobility will find the staircases in here particularly difficult. All visitors should wear sensible shoes, as the floor can be slippery.

Coves de Campanet. The Caves of Campanet are situated in the north of Mallorca in the foothills of the Tramuntana mountains. The



caves cover a surface area of approximately 3,200 square metres at a depth of 50 metres.

You can take a tour, which lasts about 40 minutes, that follows a pathway through different passages and chambers, some of which have small water pools. These chambers are known by such romantic names as Sala Romántica (the Romantic Chamber), Sala del Lago (the Lake Chamber), Castillo Encantado (Enchanted Castle), Sala de la Palmera (the Palm Tree Chamber), Cascada Sonora (Musical Waterfall) etc.

The caves are noted for the fineness and richness of their calcareous deposits in the form of stalactites and stalagmites. The caves have inspired painters such as Casimir Tarrassó who dedicated a series of signed oils to them in 1948; and poets such as Bartomeu Guasp i Gelabert who composed the ode "Caves of Sant Miquel" (1949).

They are open every day from 10am.



Cuevas del Drach (Dragon Caves), Porto Cristo.

Dark and cool, these limestone caves on the edge of Porto Cristo have become one of Mallorca's top tourist sights. Groups of several hundred people at a time are herded along 2 km of smooth paths by guides who tell you in four languages how to interpret the bizarre stalactite formations - a cactus here, a flag there, the Fairies' Theatre, Diana's Bath...

You might just think they resemble thousands of spiky parsnips hanging from the ceiling. Try to imagine how Walt Disney would conjure up a fabulous witches' cave and you have the idea. The one-hour tour ends with a floodlit, floating violin concert on Lake Martel, Europe's largest underground lake. The lake is named after the

French geologist Edouard Martel, who first explored these caves in the late 19th century, at the commission of Archduke Ludwig Salvator. Afterwards you can return by boat across the lake to the exit.

Prehistoric Human Habitation: Talaiotic Culture

Burial chambers and traces of habitation from the Paleolithic period (6000–4000 BCE) have been discovered, particularly the prehistoric settlements called *talaiots*, or *talayots*. They are Bronze Age megaliths forming part of the Talaiotic Culture, whose name is derived from the talaiots, which are the most abundant and emblematic structures from the prehistoric period of the Balearic Islands. There are at least 274 of them. Dating from the late second millennium and early first millennium BC (between 1,300–900BC), they are round or square structures built of rough stone, around a central space at the center of which stood a column. This supported a ceiling of stone slabs which also formed the floor of the next story. Their purpose is not clearly understood: religious or tribal ceremonies, storehouses and distribution centres have been suggested. They are not thought to have been used as dwelling places or as defensive buildings.

These monuments pre-date the taulas, which are usually found nearby. The Talaiotic Culture began some 3,000 years ago and ended with the



arrival of the Romans in the Balearic Islands in 123 BC.

This is a taula from the site of Talatí de Dalt about 4km west of Maó.

A non-exhaustive list of talaiots on Mallorca includes the following:

- Capocorb Vell (Llucmajor municipality). The most important Talayotic site on Majorca, with five talaiots and ancient village. The prehistoric village of Capocorb Vell is one of the main ones in Mallorca and was one of the largest. Nowadays there remain five talayots in it (two square ones and three circular ones) and 28 dwellings. The village stretched much further towards the N. E. (in Majorcan, Gregal) and was studied by the archaeologists L. Ch. Watelin and Albert Mayr, the former a Frenchman and the latter a German, but the first scientific digs were carried out in the decade between 1910 and 1920 by the great archaeologist Josep Colominas Roca.
- Necròpoli de Son Real (east of Can Picafort, Santa Margalida municipality)
- Novetiforme Alemany (Magaluf, Calvià)
- Poblat Talaiòtic de S'Illot (S'Illot, Sant Llorenç des Cardassar municipality)
- Poblat Talaiòtic de Son Fornés (Montuïri municipality)
- Sa Canova de Morell (road to Colònia de Sant Pere, Artà municipality)
- Ses Païsses (Artà municipality) Ses Païsses is a Bronze Age talayotic settlement on the southeastern outskirts of Artà in northeastern Majorca. It is one of the most important and best-preserved prehistoric sites in the Balearic Islands, although it is largely overgrown with woodland (holm oak), making it impossible to see the site as a whole. The Ses Païsses settlement is thought to have begun as a cylindrical talaiot, or "turriform", built during the first millennium BC (c900–800BC) on a hillside with a commanding view of the surrounding countryside. Originally it would have stood alone, probably as a territorial marker.
- Ses Talaies de Can Jordi (Santanyí municipality)
- S'Hospitalet Vell (road to Cales de Mallorca, Manacor municipality)



The Talaiotic people were considered a warlike race due to the abundance of talaiots or defensive towers and the existence of walled towns. In addition, the talaiots were similar in many respects to the nuraghes of Sardinia, which lends credence to the theory that the Talaiotic people were of Sardinian origin.



Central column and the slabs of the roof of a talaiot in Majorca.

Up until the end of the 20th century, it was theorized that the Talaiotic Culture arose out of interaction between new peoples from the eastern Mediterranean and local island culture, in the form of an aggressive invasion, or perhaps as a peaceful assimilation. The Talaiotic Culture arose at the same time that the crisis caused by the Sea Peoples was occurring, which had revolutionized societies in this part of the Mediterranean until the 13th century BC. These theories were based mainly on architectonic remains that exist in abundance on Majorca and Menorca.

However, archaeological excavations conducted at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries have established that the talaiots were built much later—at the beginning of the first millennium



BC, which means that they were not built during the time of the Sea Peoples. In addition, there is more and more proof that what was considered a sudden transition from a Pre-Talaiotic Culture during the Bronze Age to the Talaiotic Culture was actually a slow evolution lasting several centuries, and actually caused by a localized crisis on the Balearic Islands. However, external influences on the Talaiotic Culture cannot be completely discounted, since the existence of bronze alloys on the island (which requires tin, not available on the Balearic Islands) indicates that frequent contacts with the outside world existed.

The first evidence indicating the development of this culture appeared at the end of the 2nd millennium BC, when island society was threatened by population increases, inefficient food production, and limited living space. Agricultural techniques that the first inhabitants had brought with them a millennium before the Copper Age consisted of planting in newly-broken ground by burning forests and plowing the newly cleared ground. This technique resulted in a rapid deterioration of fertile land, and may be the main cause for the almost completely meat-based diet of the islanders towards the end of the Bronze Age.



Tumulus near the archaeological park of Puig de sa Morisca. Son Ferrer, Calvià, Mallorca.

The first great monuments on Majorca from this period are the Layered Tumuli (Túmulos Escalonados), which had a funerary purpose. The date of their construction dates from the end of the second millennium BC to the beginnings of the first millennium BC, and many of the Tumuli are associated with hypogea from the Bronze Age. In sum, the society of this era is called "Proto-Talaiotic," since many features of the subsequent Talaiotic society begin to appear at this time. These features include the clustering of the population into towns. It has been

confirmed that in some of these Talaiotic towns naviform structures were dismantled in order to use the building material to build ordinary dwellings.



At the beginning of the first millennium BC, talaiots began to proliferate on Majorca, either appearing in isolated fashion as a territorial boundary stone, or in towns, but mostly grouped together in ceremonial centers. In Majorca, these ceremonial centers were as abundant as the towns themselves. Some of them consisted of small groups of stone structures (talaiots, tumuli), scattered across the island, and frequently serving as boundary stones between the towns.

Some of these ceremonial centers consisted of a line of up to seven stone structures across a distance of more than half a kilometer. The abundance of these centers serves as evidence of their importance: most likely they were where frequent disputes were resolved, and where various festivities were celebrated. The centers also served as a seasonal and economic calendar (economic activities such as sowing, harvests, hunting), in which the young of various towns could



meet (thus guaranteeing sexual outbreeding).



Sanctuaries also existed on the island, recognizable because their two rear corners are rounded. Sanctuaries situated within the towns were small, and their interiors had only a single column, which was more or

less centered. The sanctuaries in the countryside were much bigger (10–15 m.) and tended to have many pairs of columns.

Interior of Talaiotic hypogeum of Majorca, with a column excavated from the rock.

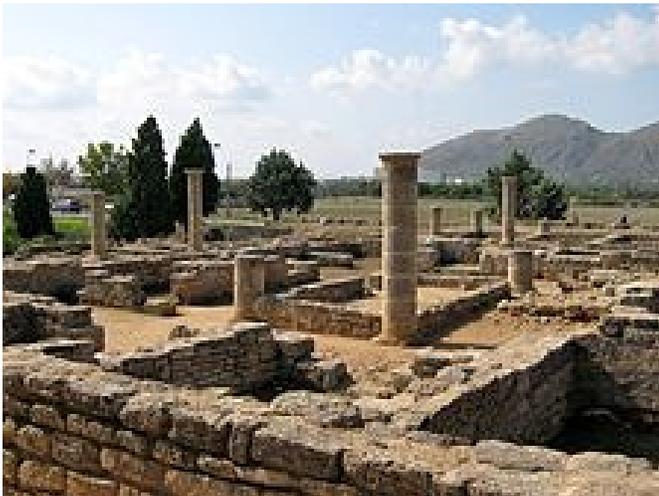
The funerary monuments of Majorca were varied, a characteristic similar to the previous age: burials were made in natural caves and in hypogea. The Talaiotic hypogea were much bigger than those from the Bronze Age, sometimes with column excavated from the surrounding rock, and the enlargement of these columns provided a reason for enlarging the hypogea themselves.

A large cemetery was also built, the Necropolis of Son Real, unique to Majorca and Menorca.

The Necropolis served as a cemetery in which the tombs were similar to small talaiots, and were either circular or square-shaped. Small "navetas" can also be found in the Necropolis. Despite the Talaiotic preference for burials to occur in hypogea, during the time of the Talaiotic Culture a novelty was introduced: the burial of a body with lime.



The very factors that gave rise to the Talaiotic Period spelled its doom. Construction of talaiots ceased, and many of them were destroyed or converted for different uses. The nearby Punic center of Ebusus, present-day Ibiza, increased its commercial influence to include the Gymnesian Islands; this economic extension in effect transformed itself into an actual Punic colonization of the Gymnesian Islands. The Mediterranean subsequently became dominated by the Roman and Carthaginian Empires. The Punic Wars would erupt between these two powers, and the islands of Mallorca and Menorca would be forcibly dragged into what is called the Post-Talaiotic Period (also known as the Balearic Culture or Post-Talaiotic Culture).



Roman Occupation of Mallorca: 123 BC to 534 AD

The island was occupied by the Romans in 123 BCE under Quintus Caecilius Metellus Balearicus. It flourished under Roman rule, during which time the towns of Pollentia (Alcúdia), and Palmaria (Palma) were founded.

Ruins of the Roman city of Pollentia

In addition, the northern town of Bocchoris, dating back to pre-Roman times, was a federated city to Rome. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Majorca_-_cite_note-2
The local economy was largely driven by olive cultivation, viticulture, and salt mining. Majorcan soldiers were valued within the Roman legions for their skill with the sling.

In 427, Gunderic and the Vandals captured the island. Roman rule was not restored until 465. Geiseric, son of Gunderic, governed Majorca, using it as his base to loot and plunder the Mediterranean,

Dark Ages: 534 to 902 AD

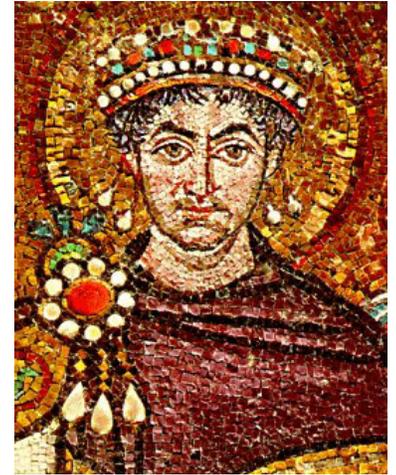
In 534, Majorca was conquered by the Byzantine Empire, led by Apollinarius, and administered as part of the province of Sardinia. Under Byzantine rule, Christianity flourished and numerous churches were built.



War.

Byzantine Empire in 555 AD under Justinian I

Apollinarius was a native of the Italian Peninsula, but apparently settled in the Vandal Kingdom of North Africa while still underage. He grew up to serve King Hilderic (r. 523-530) and was reportedly rewarded "with great sums of money". When Hilderic was overthrown by Gelimer (r. 530-534), Apollinarius escaped to Constantinople. He and other political exiles asked Justinian I (r. 527-565) to intervene. Justinian soon started the Vandalic



Justinian I

Apollinarius served under Belisarius in the War and "proved himself a brave man". He took part in the Battle of Tricamarum (15 December, 533) and his contact earned him the favour of Belisarius. In 534, Apollinarius was rewarded with appointment as governor over the islands of Ibiza, Majorca and Minorca.

From 707, the island was increasingly attacked by Muslim raiders from North Africa. Recurrent invasions led the islanders to petition Charlemagne for help.



Moorish Majorca: 902 to 1229 AD

In 902, Issam al-Hawlaní conquered the Balearic Islands, ushering in a new period of prosperity under the Emirate of Córdoba. The town of Palma was reshaped and expanded, and became known as Medina Mayurqa. Later on, with the Caliphate of Córdoba at its height, the Moors improved agriculture with irrigation and developed local industries.

Arab Baths in Palma

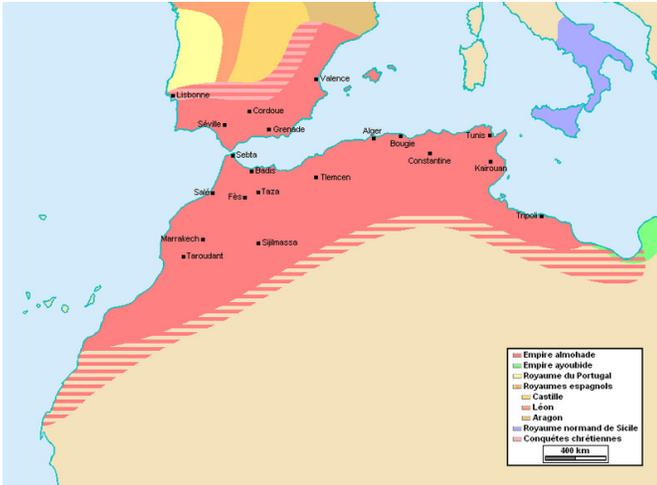
After the Caliphate was dismembered in 1015, a new, more decadent era started. Majorca came under rule by the Taifa of Dénia, and from 1087 to 1114 was an independent Taifa. During that period the island was visited by Ibn Hazm.

However, in 1114, an expedition of Pisans and Catalans, led by Ramon Berenguer III The Great, Count of Barcelona, overran the island, laying siege to Palma for eight months. He was the count of Barcelona, Girona, and Ausona from 1086 and Provence, in the Holy Roman Empire, from 1112, all until his death in Barcelona in 1131.

During his rule Catalan interests were extended on both sides of the Pyrenees. In alliance with the Count of Urgell, Ramon Berenguer conquered Barbastro and Balaguer. He also established relations with the Italian maritime republics of Pisa and Genoa, and in 1114 and 1115 attacked with Pisa the then-Muslim islands of Majorca and Ibiza. They became his tributaries and many Christian slaves there were recovered and set free. Ramon Berenguer also raided mainland Muslim



dependencies with Pisa's help, such as Valencia, Lleida and Tortosa. In 1116, Ramon traveled to Rome to petition Pope Paschal II for a crusade to liberate Tarragona.



After the city of Palma fell to seige, the invaders retreated due to problems in their own lands, and were replaced by the Almoravides from North Africa, who ruled until 1176.

The Almoravids were a Berber dynasty of Morocco, who formed an empire in the 11th century that stretched over the western Maghreb and Al-Andalus. Their capital was Marrakesh, a city they founded in 1062. The dynasty originated among the Lamtuna and the Gudala, which were nomadic Berber tribes of the Sahara, traversing the territory between the Draa, the Niger and the Senegal rivers.

Almodivad Empire at its greatest extent, 1180-1212 AD

The Almoravids were crucial in preventing a fall of Al-Andalus to the Iberian Christian kingdoms, when they decisively beat a coalition of the Castilian and Aragonese armies at the Battle of Sagrajas. This enabled them to control an empire that stretched 3,000 kilometers north to south. However, the rule of the dynasty was relatively short-lived. The Almoravids fell - at the height of their power - when they failed to quell the Masmudal rebellion initiated by Ibn Tumart. As a result, their last king Ishaq ibn Ali was killed in Marrakesh in April 1147 by the Almohads, who replaced them as a ruling dynasty both in Morocco and Al-Andalus.

The Almoravides were replaced by the Almohad dynasty until 1229. The Almohad Dynasty (Berber: "the monotheists" or "the unitarians"), was a Moroccan Berber-Muslim dynasty founded in the 12th century that established a Berber state in Tinmel in the Atlas Mountains in roughly 1120. The Almohad dominance of Iberia continued until 1212, when Muhammad III, "al-Nasir" (1199–1214) was defeated at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in the Sierra Morena by an alliance of the Christian princes of Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and Portugal. Nearly all of the Moorish dominions in Iberia were lost soon after, with the great Moorish cities of Cordova and Seville falling to the Christians in 1236 and 1248 respectively.

Abú Yahya was the last Moorish leader of Majorca. In 1208 he was the last of the various governing Almohad Valis of Majorca who were appointed from Marrakech. In Majorca Abu-Yahya created a semi-independent principedom, with only a formal submission to the Almohad emir. He ruled the island and the entire Balearic archipelago in the name of the Almohad Empire until James I of Aragon conquered it in 1229 during the conquest of Majorca.

Medieval Majorca: 1229 to 1324 AD

In 1229, King James I of Aragon launched an invasion which landed on Santa Ponça, Majorca, on September 8–9, 1229 with 15,000 men and 1,500 horses, entering the city of Medina Mayurqa (now Palma) on December 31, 1229, and annexing the island to his Crown of Aragon after a campaign which climaxed on October 30, 1230.

King James I of Aragon

After the death of James I in 1276, his kingdom was divided between his two sons. James II became king of the new, and brief, Kingdom of Majorca. In 1285, Alfonso III of Aragon, son of Peter III of Aragon, seized power and his uncle James was forced to flee the island.



The successor of Alfonso III returned the power to James II. After his death in 1311, he was succeeded by his son Sancho I of Majorca. James III, nephew of Sancho, and only nine years old, became king in 1324.



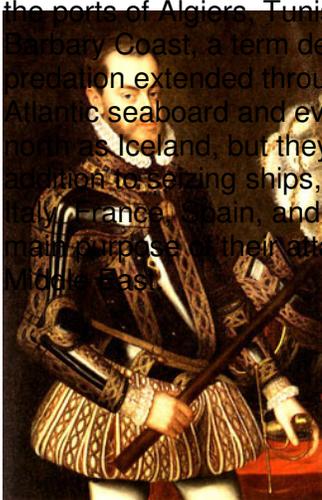
King Peter IV of Aragon

However, in 1344, King Peter IV of Aragon invaded, deposed James III of Majorca and made himself King of Majorca, and re-incorporated the island into the Crown. His reign was occupied with attempts to strengthen the crown against the Union of Aragon and other such devices of the nobility, with their near constant revolts, and with foreign wars, in Sardinia, Sicily, the Mezzogiorno, Greece, and the Balearics. King James III was forced to flee to Rosselló.

Modern Era

From 1479, the Crown of Aragon was in dynastic union with that of Castile. The Barbary corsairs of North Africa often attacked the Balearic Islands, and in response coastal watchtowers and fortified churches were erected.

The Barbary pirates, sometimes called Barbary corsairs or Ottoman corsairs, were pirates and privateers who operated from North Africa, based primarily in the ports of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. This area was known in Europe as the Barbary Coast, a term derived from the name of its Berber inhabitants. Their predation extended throughout the Mediterranean, south along West Africa's Atlantic seaboard and even South America, and into the North Atlantic as far north as Iceland, but they primarily operated in the western Mediterranean. In addition to seizing ships, they engaged in Razzias, raids on European coastal towns and villages, mainly in Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal, but also in the British Isles, the Netherlands and as far away as Iceland. The main purpose of their attacks was to capture Christian slaves for the Muslim market in North Africa and the Middle East.



As a result, in 1570, King Philip II of Spain and his advisors were considering complete evacuation of the Balearic islands. During Philip's reign there were separate state bankruptcies in 1557, 1560, 1575, and 1596. This was partly the cause for the declaration of independence which created the Dutch Republic in 1581. A devout Catholic, Philip is also known for organizing a huge naval expedition

against Protestant England in 1588, known usually as the Spanish Armada, which was unsuccessful, partly due to storms and grave logistical problems.

King Philip II of Spain

In the early 18th century, the War of the Spanish Succession resulted in the replacement of that dynastic union with a unified Spanish monarchy.



In 1716 the Nueva Planta decrees made Majorca part of the Spanish province of *Baleares*, roughly the same to present-day Iles Balears province and autonomous community.



In 1891 a disease destroyed Majorca's vineyards and decimated the island's main source of income.

From 1891 to 1895 Majorca witnessed a major emigration of islanders to mainland Spain and to the Americas.

20th century and today

A Nationalist stronghold at the start of the Spanish Civil War, Majorca was subjected to an amphibious landing, on August 16, 1936, aimed at driving the Nationalists from Majorca and reclaiming the island for the Republic. Although the Republicans heavily outnumbered their opponents and managed to push 12 kilometres (7.5 mi) inland, superior Nationalist air power mainly provided by Fascist Italy forced the Republicans to retreat and to leave the island completely by September 12. Those events became known as the Battle of Majorca.

For the rest of the civil war the island was used as a base for the Nationalist navy and air force, who mounted raids on the Spanish mainland.

Since the 1950s, the advent of mass tourism has transformed the island into a centre of attraction for foreign visitors and attracting workers from mainland Spain. The boom in tourism caused Palma to grow significantly. In 1960, Majorca received 500,000 visitors, while in 1997, it received 6,739,700. In 2008, 22,832,865 passengers passed through the Palma de Mallorca Airport with an additional 1.5 million arriving by sea.

In the 21st century, urban redevelopment, under the so-called *Pla Mirall* (English "Mirror Plan"), attracted groups of immigrant workers from outside the European Union, especially from Africa and South America.

Population growth of Palma de Majorca (1900–2005)



Palma de Mallorca



The capital of Majorca, Palma, was founded as a Roman camp called *Palmaria* upon the remains of a Talaiotic settlement. The turbulent history of the city saw it subject to several Vandal sackings during the fall of the Roman Empire. It was later reconquered by the Byzantines, colonised by the Moors (who called it *Medina Mayurqa*), and finally established by James I of Aragon.

In 1983, Palma became the capital of the autonomous region of the Balearic Islands.

As of the 2009 census, the population of the city of Palma proper was 401,270, and the population of the entire urban area was 517,285, ranking as the twelfth largest urban area of Spain. Almost half of the total population of Majorca live in Palma.

Things to See and Do in Palma

Hop-on/Hop-off Bus Tour (\$12 for 24 hrs (0930-2200), \$20 for 48 hrs)

Discover the highlights of Palma de Mallorca on a city sightseeing open-top bus tour, and jump off at any of the 16 stops to explore the city's attractions at your own pace. The island's capital offers a rich mix of history,

culture, and nightlife, and the fascinating central area comprises narrow streets between high walls of ancient buildings. Hop-off at dozens of attractions, such as the Palau de L'Alumndaina, a royal palace that has stood since the Arab conquest, and is still home to the Royal Family. Buses run every 20 - 25 minutes, from 09:30 in summer, and 10:00 the rest of the year. Admire sweeping views of Palma Bay as you tour, and jump off at any of the following stops:

- Stop 1 - Antoni Maura
- Stop 2 - Pl.del Mercat
- Stop 3 - La Rambla/Carrer dels Horts
- Stop 4 - Pl. dEspanya
- Stop 5 - Av. Alexandre Rossello
- Stop 6 - Av. Gabriel Alomar i Villalonga
- Stop 7 - Passeig Maritim
- Stop 8 - Poble Espanyol
- Stop 9 - Castell de Bellver
- Stop 10 - Pl.Gomila
- Stop 11 - Av. Joan Miro
- Stop 12 - Estacio Maritima
- Stop 13 - Av. Gabriel Roca
- Stop 14 - Pl. Porta de Santa Catalina
- Stop 15 - Av. Jaume III
- Stop 16 - Moll Comercial

Cathedral Le Seu (or Seo)

Any visitors approaching Palma by sea cannot help but be impressed, even astonished, by the graceful Gothic cathedral as it gradually emerges into view.

Its upward-reaching lines seem to rise endless as the boat gets nearer, until they merge into its protective shield of palm trees in front, the old quarter houses behind it, and the colorful fishing boats and their undulating reflection in the calm waters of the bay.



The Seo, as it is called here, was built on the site of a preexisting Arab mosque. One night in 1229, as King James I was on his way to recapture Majorca, his fleet was struck by a terrible storm. He vowed then and there to the Virgin Mary that if he survived nature's fury, he would erect a church in her honor. And after the storm had blown over, finding himself safe and sound, he immediately undertook the project. It was a vow that was to take an inordinate amount of time to fulfill. Begun in 1230, the cathedral was finished in 1601.



The rear interior reveals the majestic "Royal Chapel", which is nearly as large as a church in its own right: 25 meter long and 16 meter wide. The main altar, consecrated on October 1, 1346, is surmounted by one enormous "wrought-iron chandelier", forged by Antoni Gaudi as if it were the baldaquin for the altar.

Behind it, we see 110 breathtaking walnut choir-stalls sculpted in flaming Gothic style and, to left, a noteworthy "Renaissance pulpit" by J. de Salas. On a slightly higher level at the back of the choir-stalls, the "Chapel of the Holy Trinity" reveals the ancient tribune of the kings of Majorca and a sort of present-day



pantheon for the same: in fact, it houses the sepulcher containing the mummified body of Jaime II and a 1948 Gothic-style tomb by Federico Marés with the ashes of Jaime III, the last in the line of the short-lived but glorious Majorcan dynasty.

The "Treasury" is another "must" of the cathedral. It is located in two capitular rooms dominated by a monumental churrigueresque-style door. The first room, by Guillermo Sagrera, is Gothic, while the second is baroque. Its inventory of priceless items includes an enormous gold-plated silver monstrance, which is elaborately etched in Gothic style, and two large baroque candelabras made of silver and weighing 250 kilo each. They were made at the beginning of the 18th century by silversmith Juan Matons of Barcelona on commission from a certain Juan Roig. Their historic and artistic value is truly beyond calculation.

Pilar and Joan Miro Foundation (Art Museum) (1000-1500 holidays, €6)



Joan Miro (1893-1983) was one of the most famous Catalan artists of the 20th century. He was a very prolific artist and he produced a very large amount of art. He went to live in Mallorca in 1956 and stayed until he died in 1983. The museum contains many of his works of art, with paintings, drawings and graphic works. These were donated by the artist and came from four workshops he had in Mallorca. The gardens exhibit many of his sculptures.

The modern building where the Foundation is housed was designed by the Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, who was a winner of the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1996.



Visitors can see the studios where Miro worked and one can see the tools that he used. Miro and his wife Pilar Juncosa donated the studios to the City of Palma de Mallorca.

Bellver Castle (Castell de Bellver)



Bellver Castle is a Gothic style castle on a hill 3 km northwest of Palma on the Island of Majorca, Balearic Islands, Spain. It was built in the 14th century for King James II of Majorca, and is one of the few circular castles in Europe.

Long used as a military prison throughout the 18th to mid-20th century, it is now under civilian control, being one of the main tourist attractions of the island, as well as the seat for the city's History Museum.

The castle's plan, circular floor with round towers attached to it seems to have been inspired by the upper complex of the Herodium in the West Bank, which is also circular and has a large principal tower and three minor towers as well. They are attached while the principal one is coupled to the complex by a high bridge over the surrounding moat.

The main part of the fortification was built by architect Pere Salvà, who also worked in the construction of the Royal Palace of La Almudaina, together with other master masons between 1300 and 1311 for King James II of Aragon and Majorca. Rock from the hill where the castle sits was used for the building, which has eventually led to the appearance of cracks. Once the castle had been built, and following the introduction of artillery, the battlements on the top balconies and the barbican disappeared, being soon followed by those in every tower; loopholes were built instead.

Llotja (16th Century Mercantile, free)

With twin turrets and an angel over the door, this 15th century seafront building looks half-castle, half-church. In fact it is neither. It was designed by Guillem Sagrera (the architect of the cathedral's Portal del Mirador) as the city's exchange when Mallorca was a major maritime trading centre in the 15th century.

As trade declined through the centuries, Palma ceased to have so much commercial importance and the building changed its use according to need. It was used as a store for goods and guns during the War of Independence and became a gallery for fine art at the end of the 19th century.



The rectangular hall has an octagonal tower at each corner, with ten smaller towers to act as buttresses. Stand among the spiraling pillars, gaze up at the rib vaulting, and try to imagine the Majorcan merchants of 500 years ago haggling over silk, spices and silver.

Nowadays La Llotja is a cultural centre, hosting temporary exhibitions. It is not open unless there is an exhibition on.

Majorcan cartographic school

Majorca has a long history of seafaring. The Majorcan cartographic school or the "Catalan school" refers to a collection of cartographers, cosmographers, and navigational instrument-makers that flourished in Majorca and partly in mainland Catalonia in the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries. Majorcan cosmographers and cartographers developed breakthroughs in cartographic techniques, namely the "normal portolan chart", which was fine-tuned for navigational use and the plotting by compass of navigational routes, prerequisites for the discovery of the New World.

Port de Pollensa

Pollensa (Puerto Pollensa) is a charming holiday town located on the north east corner of Majorca in Spain, at the foot the Tramantura mountain range, in the Pollensa Bay.

Pollensa is one of the most popular holiday resorts in Majorca, Spain. Pollensa is located about 58 km. from the capital city Palma de Mallorca. Pollensa is a lovely place with mountains at the background.



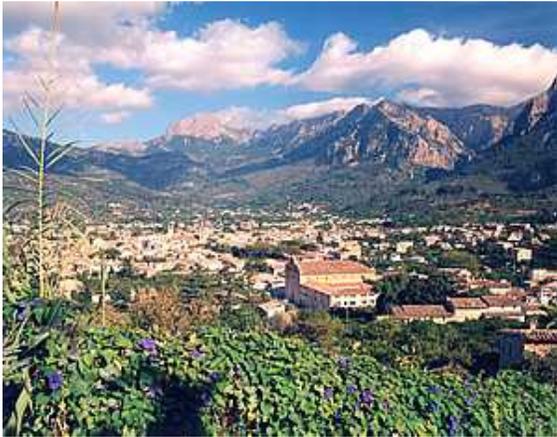
Puerto Pollensa is the port, beach, tourist and accommodation area of Pollensa and it is located about 5 km. from the old town of Pollensa.

Pollensa Old Town, with its pretty streets and squares are worth a see. A great day out at the Pollensa Old Town and experiencing the authentic Majorcan life by visiting the Gothic church, narrow streets and climbing the Calvary Steps (Calvary Way) for great views of the island is one of the best attractions in Pollensa. The Cala de San Vicenç and the Formentor peninsula are also great places to worth to visit and see around Pollensa.

The Pine Walk area of the Puerto Pollensa is a great place to visit and stroll. There are plenty of shops, bars

and restaurants with beautiful views along the Pine Walk area of Puerto Pollensa.

Another popular holiday resort of Alcudia is located only 8 km. from Pollensa. Holidaymakers may visit the old town of Alcudia and explore the Roman ruins, ancient city walls and quaint narrow streets and have great day out.



Port de Sóller

Sóller is an attractive town on Mallorca's north-west Coast. Situated some 3 Km. inland from its port, 'Port de Sóller', the town lies in a large, fertile, bowl-shaped valley. Sóller shares its valley with the village of Fornalutx and the hamlet of Biniaraix, the combined population is around 13,000, and the valley is famous



for its orange groves and terraces of ancient olive trees. The village of Deià is just down the coast.

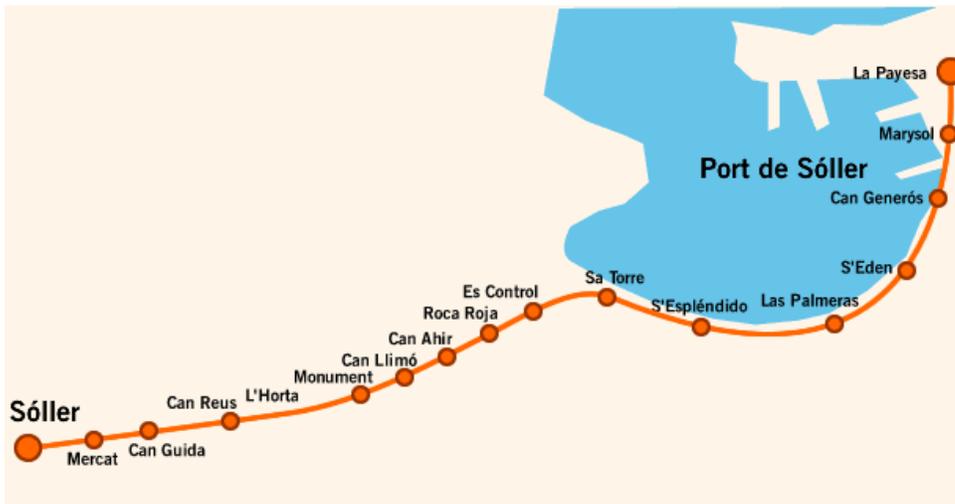
Ferrocarril de Sóller (€5-20, tram/train; 0800-1900, 7 scheduled excursions each day)

Ever since 1912 the Sóller railway has been running a daily train service along the 27.3 km route between Palma de Mallorca and Sóller, without interruption. From 1913 it has also run the tram service along the 4.9 kilometres from Sóller and the Port of Sóller.

The railway is characterized, amongst other things, by the fact that it is narrow gauge, the track width being 914 mm (an English yard), which is infrequent nowadays; moreover its meticulously finished, and maintained using traditional methods.

The Sóller railway also stands out for the special, attractive route it runs along, overcoming the natural barrier of the Sierra de Alfàbia mountain range which is 2.8 km wide and 496 metres high. To do so, in just seven kilometres, the railway rises up 199 metres with an inclination of 23 millimetres, runs through thirteen longitudinal tunnels ranging in length from 33 to 2,876 metres, crosses over several bridges, the "cinc-ponts" viaduct which has five arches with spans 8 metres high and a great many bends, some with radii below 190 metres.





On 4th October of 1913 Mallorca's first electric tram line was inaugurated, running between Sóller and the Port of Sóller.

Construction of the Sóller tram began after the inauguration of the Palma to Sóller railway line. The project for this line was designed and directed by Pedro Garau, and 4868 metres of track were laid. One outstanding feature of it is the iron bridge over the Torrent Major which was constructed by Maquinista Terrestre y Marítima.

Initially the tram had an electric power station located in the Sóller station. The station was fed by a 65 horsepower explosion engine which worked a Siemens-Schuckert dynamo, providing a continuous 600 volt current.

Although the Sóller tram was designed for the transport of passengers, it was also used to transport merchandise down to the port. Fresh fish was carried from the Port to Sóller in a small isothermal car and coal was taken to the former military submarine base in the Port of Sóller and the "El Gas" factory on trailers; mines and torpedoes were also transported from the Caubet magazine.

The three motor trams, numbered 1 to 3, and their trailers 5 and 6 are the originals, dating from 1912, ordered from Carde & Escoriaza in Zaragoza. The open 'jardinera' trailers were acquired from Palma trams in 1954

The Sóller tramway also has five motor trams from Lisbon, numbered 20 to 24 and re-gauged to fit the 914 mm track gauge.

Banyalbufar

Banyalbufar clings to the western coastline of Mallorca on a steep hillside that falls into the sea. Glorious views of the Tramuntana mountains and the sun setting into the sea await you here. Access is by small and windy coastal roads - in particular, the road to the south of the village.

People come to Banyalbufar to see one thing - its terraced hillsides, sloping down to the sea. Developed by the Moors and divided by drystone walls, these terraces speak powerfully of man's ingenuity in creating farmland out of inhospitable cliffs. Until recently it was the custom for each generation to add a further tier.



In Moorish times the town, whose Arabic name means 'vineyard by the sea', was famed for its Malvasia wine. Nowadays the terraces are mostly used to grow vegetables, though a few vines have been planted once again. Banyalbufar's popularity with foreign artists has led some people to conclude that it will be the next Deia.