

Palma & the Badia de Palma

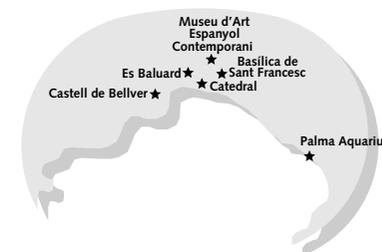


Set on a magnificent broad bay, Palma de Mallorca is a city of light that can happily compete with any European regional capital. Its old heart oozes centuries of history in its twisting lanes, powerful churches, traditional pastry shops and baroque mansions. For those who think of Mediterranean islands as being all about sand and sea, the cultural charge and sophistication of this city can come as a surprise. The wedding of culture, history and seaside recreation is perhaps best symbolised in the position of its Gothic cathedral, one of Europe's finest, overlooking the sparkling Mediterranean and a short walk to the nearest beach.

The city lies at the midpoint of a sweeping bay, the Badia de Palma. To the west, a series of idyllic, aqua-hued beaches and inlets have managed to retain their beauty despite the tourist development. People of all walks of life crowd into the resorts to swing, chill and, in some cases, wreak nocturnal havoc in the heart of the Magaluf party zone. Other beaches spread east from central Palma, with more Euro-partying happening at Platja de Palma and S'Arenal. Then, suddenly, all the ruckus ends at the quiet, residential eastern tip of the bay, with several hidden inlets to swim in.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Admire the fantasy of Barceló within the magnificent Gothic **Catedral** (p68)
- Shudder at the sharks in the brand-new **Palma Aquarium** (p101)
- Wander into the exquisite Gothic cloister of the **Basílica de Sant Francesc** (p76)
- Take in the contemporary art inside the one-time city walls at **Es Baluard** (p80)
- Get lost in Old Palma's labyrinth and search out the courtyards of **baroque mansions** (p80)
- Get a quick lesson in modern Spanish art at the **Museu d'Art Espanyol Contemporani** (p78)
- Wander around the towers and enjoy the view from **Castell de Bellver** (p83)



PALMA DE MALLORCA

pop 375,770

Palma de Mallorca is Mallorca's only true city. The old quarter is an attractive blend of tree-lined boulevards and cobbled laneways, Gothic churches and baroque palaces, designer bars and slick boutiques.

HISTORY

Known to the Romans as Palmeria or Palma, to the Muslims as Medina Mayurka (City of Mallorca) and to their Christian successors as Ciutat de Mallorca or Ciudad Capital (City Capital), to most Mallorquins the city continues simply to be Ciutat. Officially the name Palma de Mallorca began to impose itself in the early 18th century.

By the 12th century the Muslim city was one of the most flourishing capitals in Europe. After the Christian conquest in 1229, it again entered a period of prosperity as a trade centre in the 14th century. By the 16th century, along with the rest of the island, it was sinking into a protracted period of torpor. The great seaward

OUR TOP PICKS

- **Hotel** Hotel Palacio Ca Sa Galesa (p86)
- **Restaurant** Refectori (p90)
- **Bar** Hostal Corona (p94)
- **Market** Mercat de l'Olivar (p89)
- **Festival** Corpus Christi (p85)

walls that you see today were largely built in the 16th and 17th centuries, when the city's seasonal torrent, the Riera, was diverted from its natural course along Passeig d'es Born to its present location west of the city walls.

The old city centre then went into decline. Even today, parts of the former fishing district of Es Puig de Sant Pere and the tight web of lanes in the Sa Gerreria area in the eastern half of the old city (between Carrer del Sindicat and Carrer del Temple) retain an air of neglect. Large slabs of the latter have been torn down since the mid-1990s to make way for new blocks of flats. The bulk of the sea walls were demolished at the beginning of the 20th century to allow rapid expansion of the city. But the heart of the city

has been spruced up beyond recognition since tourist cash began to flow into the island in the 1960s and a report in 2007 claimed that property around the Dalt Murada was among the most expensive in all Spain.

ORIENTATION

Palma sits halfway along the Badia de Palma. The oldest parts of the city are enclosed within Passeig de Mallorca (west), the Avingudes (the north and east avenues) that roughly mark the line of the old city walls, and the waterfront. The train and bus stations lie within about 400m of each other just off Avinguda de Joan March, northeast of the city centre. The airport bus stops here.

The oldest part of the city, Sa Calatrava (where the Cathedral and Palau de l'Almudaina stand) is separated from the waterfront by the Parc de la Mar. The bulk of the sights and most charming hotels are bunched together here. Es Puig de Sant Pere, across Passeig d'es Born, is poorer on specific sights but rewards wandering along its narrow lanes and is full of places to eat and drink.

The area between Plaça Major, Plaça d'Espanya and Passeig de Mallorca is less intriguing but contains some key sights, hotels and restaurants. The Santa Catalina district, west of Passeig de Mallorca, is teeming with restaurants and bars, while Es Portitxol, Es Molinar and Ciutat Jardí, along the coast east of the centre, offer beaches, eateries and cafés. Finally, the Passeig Marítim and Plaça de Gomis areas in western Palma are home to many of the city's clubbing options.

Beyond, spreading especially to the north and east, are rings of suburbs and industrial zones (called *polígonos*) that have spread since the 1960s.

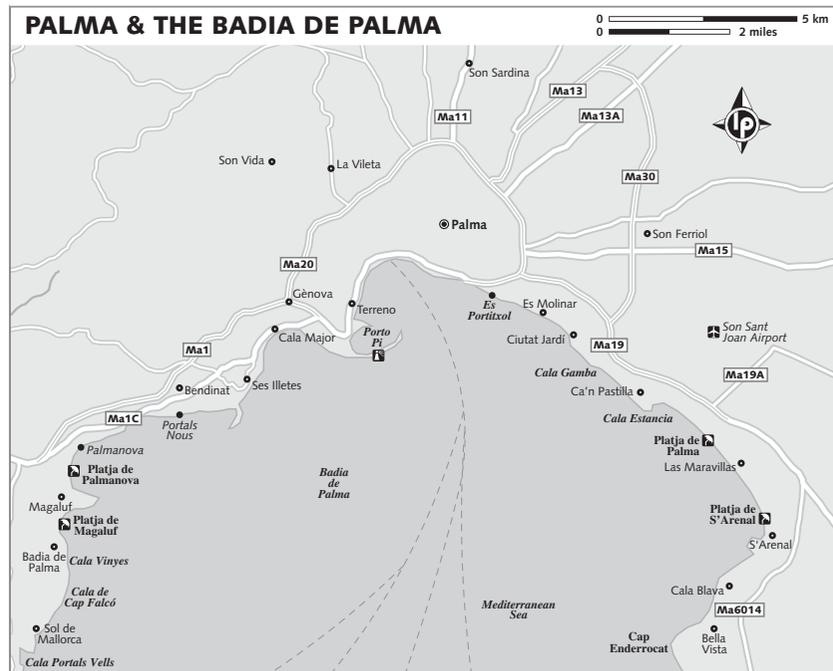
INFORMATION

Bookshops

Dialog (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 228129; www.dialog-palma.com; Carrer del Carme 14; ☎ 9.30am-2pm & 4.30-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1.30pm Sat) This is a gold mine of books on Mallorca in German and English.

Fiol Llibres (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 721428; www.abooks.com; Carrer dels Oms 45a; ☎ 10am-1.30pm & 5-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1.30pm Sat) The shelves groan under the weight of secondhand books and some antique gems.

Trading Place (Map pp70-1; ☎ 871 941350; www.tradingplacemallorca.com; Carrer del Pou 35; ☎ 10am-1.30pm & 5-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1.30pm Sat) Exchange and sale of secondhand books.



Cultural Centres

Alliance Française (☎ 971 714101; www.alliancefrancaise.es; Carrer de Sant Feliu 9) Drop by for a shot of Gallic culture (film cycles, exhibitions and the like).

International House (☎ 971 726408; www.ihes.com/pal; Plaça de la Cort 11) This is mainly a centre for English, German and Spanish tuition. Qualified teachers may find work here.

Emergency

Emergency phone numbers valid in Palma and across the island:

Ambulance (☎ 061)

Bomberos (Fire Department; ☎ in Palma 080, rest of the island 085)

General EU emergency number (☎ 112)

Guardia Civil (☎ 062)

Polícia Local (☎ 092; Avinguda de Sant Ferran 42)

Polícia Nacional (☎ 091; Carrer de Ruiz de Alda 8)

Internet Access

Azul Cybercafé (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 712927; www.azulgroup.com; Carrer de la Soledat 4; per hr €2.90; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, noon-6pm Sat)

Internet Resources

www.palmademallorca.es The official site of the City of Palma (Ajuntament), with links to tourist pages, events and various municipal services. Also has interactive map of the city.

www.visit-palma.com Asociación Hotelera de Palma de Mallorca website, with hotel and general information for Palma de Mallorca.

Left Luggage

There is no left luggage service at the airport or port.

Media

For local and national newspapers see p196. For local news in English have a look at either *Euro Weekly News Mallorca* (www.euroweeklynews.com) or the *Daily Bulletin* (www.majorcadailybulletin.es). More substantial are the weekly German-language newspapers, *Mallorca Magazin* (www.mallorcamaagazin.net) and *Mallorca Zeitung* (www.mallorcazeitung.es).

For an idea of what's on, try the fortnightly *Youthing* and quarterly *V&mos* (www.vamos-mallorca.com), which you'll find in Palma's tourist offices. *Digame* (www.digamemallorca.com) is a free monthly with island-wide events, but isn't that detailed. Other free monthlies are *Quecuando* and *TodoPalma*.

WI-FI ACCESS

Wi-fi access is far from common in Palma. The occasional restaurant and café is set up for it, as are some of the better hotels (in which you usually pay). Of course, you can just flip your laptop open and hope to get lucky!

You'll find most of them in the tourist offices and distributed in bars.

There is a growing stable of glossy monthlies in English and German. The free *abcmallorca* (www.abc-mallorca.com) has articles on the city and island. *Contemporary Balears* (www.contemporarybalears.com) is published three times a year and has interesting articles and listings. Look out for it in hotels and some restaurants, bars and galleries. The quarterly *Inpalma*, distributed to hotels, has a curious mix of views and reviews.

The annual *Mallorca Geht Aus!* (€8.80; also available in Germany, Austria and Switzerland) has more than 200 glossy pages packed with stories and reviews of anything from *fincas* (farmhouses) to clubs.

Medical Services

Hospital Son Dureta (☎ 971 175000; Carrer de Andrea Doria 55) To get here from the centre, take bus 5 (from Passeig de Mallorca), 29 (from Passeig Marítim) or 46. For an ambulance, call ☎ 061 or the Red Cross on ☎ 971 202222.

In the main newspapers (such as the *Diario de Mallorca*) you will find a list of pharmacies open from 9am to 10pm and others (a handful) from 10pm to 9am. Some handy ones:

Farmàcia Castañer-Buades (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 711534; Plaça de Joan Carles I 3; ☎ 9am-midnight)

Farmàcia Munar Masot (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 726817; Avinguda d'Alexandre Rosselló 19; ☎ 9am-midnight)

Farmàcia Salvà Trobat (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 458788; Carrer de la Balanguera 3; ☎ 24hr)

Money

Bank branches, ATMs and exchange offices abound at Palma's airport (but not the ferry port) and around the centre of town (eg Plaça d'Espanya, Plaça Major, Passeig d'es Born, Carrer de Sant Miquel).

Post

Post office (Map pp70-1; Carrer de la Constitució 6; ☎ 8.30am-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-2pm Sat)

Tourist Information

The island's general tourist office is in Palma (see p203). You can get lots of local city info at ☎ 010, with luck even in English. In addition several city tourist offices are scattered across the city.

Airport tourist office (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 789556; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Mon-Sat, 9am-1.30pm Sun)

Main municipal tourist office (Map pp70-1; ☎ 902 102365; www.palmavirtual.es; Casal Solleric, Passeig d'es Born 27; ☎ 9am-8pm)

Municipal tourist office (Map pp70-1; Parc de les Estacions; ☎ 9am-8pm)

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Palma is fairly safe. The main concern is petty theft – pickpockets and bagsnatchers. Some streets can be dodgy at night, when the occasional junkie, prostitute and pimp comes out to play. This is especially so around the Sa Gerreria district south off Carrer del Sindicat, an area still known as the *barri xinés* (Chinese quarter, which has nothing Chinese about it but is rather a curious appellation for 'red light district'). The streets around Plaça de Sant Antoni and the nearby avenues, such as Avinguda de Villalonga and Avinguda d'Alexandre Rosselló, are worked by prostitutes at night. They pose no threat but their pimps and customers might.

**SIGHTS
Old Palma**

The heart of the old city (the districts of Sa Portella and Sa Calatrava) has always been centred on its main place of worship (where the Cathedral now stands) and the one-time seat of secular power opposite it. The bulk of Palma's sights are jammed into this warren of tight, twisting lanes and sunny squares, where massive churches abound alongside noble houses. The bright Mediterranean light and glittering sea, never far away, lend it a matchless cheer. After selecting some key sights, simply get lost in the maze and poke your nose in wherever takes your fancy.

CATEDRAL

Cast your mind back, when you contemplate this extraordinary sun-kissed monument to Christianity, to earlier days. Here stood the central mosque of Medina Mayurka, capital of Muslim Mallorca for three centuries. When Jaume I and his marauding men forced their way into the city in 1229, the decision had

probably already been taken to destroy this symbol of the infidel.

Work on the **Catedral** (La Seu in Catalan; Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 723130; www.catedraldemallorca.org; Carrer del Palau Reial 9; adult/student/under 10yr €4/3/free; ☎ 10am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2.30pm Sat Jun-Sep, 10am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2.30pm Sat Apr-May & Oct, 10am-2.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2.30pm Sat Nov-Mar), one of Europe's largest, did not begin until 1300. Rather, the mosque was used in the interim as a church and dedicated to the Virgin Mary (as was customary in 'reconquered' mosques). Medieval construction times were slow, and as the cathedral was slowly raised, the mosque it replaced was dismantled. Work wasn't completed until 1601.

The awesome structure is predominantly Gothic, apart from the main façade (replaced after an earthquake in 1851) and parts of the interior. It is remarkable for many things, not the least that its sacristans allowed the likes of madcap Modernista Antoni Gaudí and, more recently, contemporary art icon Miquel Barceló to get their hands on it and let their imaginations run riot.

The main façade is startling, quite beautiful and completely mongrel. The original was a Renaissance cherry on the Gothic cake, but an earthquake in 1851 (which caused considerable panic but no loss of life) severely damaged it. Rather than mend the original, it was decided to add some neo-Gothic flavour, which with its interlaced flying buttresses on each flank and soaring pinnacles forms a masterful example of the style. The result, according to the experts, is a hybrid of the Renaissance original (in particular the main doorway) and an inevitably artificial-feeling, 19th-century pseudo-Gothic monumentalism.

PALMA IN TWO DAYS

Palma makes a great city break and with a will to cram you can do a lot in a weekend. Start touring with the obvious: **La Catedral** (opposite) and the **Palau de l'Almudaina** (p73). You could spend hours wandering the old town lanes and, to add a little structure, throw in visits to **Can Marqués** (p75), **Casa-Museu Joaquim Torrents Lladó** (p76) and the **Banys Àrabs** (p76). The first two are fine Palma mansions and the latter is what remains of medieval Arab baths. Lunch at **La Taberna del Caracol** (p89). Restart touring with the **Basílica de Sant Francesc** (p76) and **Es Baluard** (p80), where you can stop for a drink on the battlements. For a night out, make for nearby Santa Catalina, with dinner at **Fàbrica 23** (p91), drinks at **Idem Café** (p94) and clubbing along **Passeig Marítim** (p95). The following day is beach day. Make for the strand at **Ciutat Jardí** (p84) and book lunch at the waterside **El Bungalow** (p92). Catch a few more rays and then move around the coast for chilled afternoon drinks at **Puro Beach** near **Cala Estancia** (p101). After sunset head for dinner at **Refectori** (p90).

Entry to the church is from the north flank, through a series of four rooms that, with the cloister, form what seems like an afterthought tacked on to the side. You get tickets in the first room and then enter a sacristy, which hosts the main part of the small **Museu de la Catedral**, at the centre of which is a huge gold-plated monstrance. Interesting items include a portable altar, thought to have belonged to Jaume I. Its little compartments contain saints' relics. Other reliquaries can be seen, including one purporting to hold three thorns from Christ's crown of thorns. Such relics had enormous value in medieval Christian Europe. Next come two chapterhouses, one Gothic (by Guillem Sagrera) and the second baroque. The latter is dominated by a *relicario de la vera cruz* (reliquary of the true cross).

On passing through one of the side chapels into the cathedral itself, your gaze soars high to the cross vaults, supported by slender, octagonal pillars. The broad nave and aisles are flanked by chapels. The walls support three levels of exquisite stained glass, including five magnificent rose windows. The grandest (the *oculus maior* or 'great eye') is above the main altar and is said to be the biggest in the world. Visit in the morning and see the stunning effect of its coloured light and shapes reflected on the west wall. This spectacle is at its best in February and November.

Gaudí carried out renovations from 1903 to 1914. His most important contribution was opening up many of the long bricked-up windows, adding new stained glass and improving lighting. What most people notice today, however, is the strange baldachin that hovers over the main altar. Topped by a fanciful sculpture of Christ crucified and flanked

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Austrian Honorary Consulate.....	2	H3	Església de Sant Crist de la Sang.....	65	D2	La Taberna del Caracol.....	127	F6			
Azul Cybercafé.....	3	D5	Església de Sant Jaume.....	66	E3	Refectori.....	(see 93)				
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Dialog.....	6	F2	Església de Sant Nicolau.....	69	E4	Sa Llimona.....	130	A3			
Dutch Consulate.....	7	F2	Església de Santa Caterina de Siena.....	70	F2	Sa Pastanaga.....	131	F2			
Farmàcia Castañer-Buades.....	8	D4	Església de Santa Eulàlia.....	71	F5	DRINKING ☑ ☑					
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by the Virgin Mary and St John, it looks like the gaping jaw of some oversized prehistoric shark dangling from the ceiling of an old science museum. Some 35 lamps hang from it and what looks like a flying carpet is spread above it. The genius of Barcelona Modernisme seems to have lost the plot here, but then this was supposed to be a temporary version. The definitive one was never made.

Not content with this strangeness, the parish commissioned contemporary Mallorcan artist Miquel Barceló (an agnostic) with the remake of the Capella del Santíssim i Sant Pere, at the rear of the south aisle. Done in 15 tonnes of ceramics, this dreamscape representing the miracle of the loaves and fishes was unveiled in 2007. Slabs of clay seem to have been plastered onto the chapel walls. On the left, fish and other marine creatures burst from the wall. The opposite side has a jungle look, with representations of bread and fruit. In between the fish and palm fronds, and standing above stacks of skulls, appears a luminous body that is supposed to be Christ but is modelled on the short and stocky artist.

Other notable elements of the interior include the giant organ, built in 1798 (free recitals are held at 12.30pm on the first Tuesday of each month), and the two pulpits, the smaller of which was partly redone by Gaudi.

PALAU DE L'ALMUDAINA

Now as in medieval times, the island's maximum secular authority (in the person of the King of Spain) resides at least symbolically opposite the Cathedral in the **Palau de l'Almudaina** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 214134; www.patrimoni.nacional.es; Carrer del Palau Reial s/n; adult/student €3.20/2.30, audioguide €2; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Apr-Sep, 10am-2pm & 4-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Oct-Mar; note that ID may be requested). The royal family are rarely in residence, except for the occasional ceremony, as they prefer to spend summer in the Palau Marivent (in Cala Major).

The Romans are said to have built a *castrum* (fort) here, possibly on the site of a prehistoric settlement. The Wàlis (governors) of Muslim Mallorca altered and expanded the Roman fort, while Jaume I and his successors modified it to such an extent that little of the Muslim version remains. The forbidding walls are strengthened by squat towers. A higher dungeon-like tower rises from the heart of the residence and is topped by a bronze statue of

the Guardian Angel (which must make a fine lightning rod).

The first narrow room you enter has a black-and-white ceiling, symbolising the extremes of night and day, darkness and light. You then enter a series of three grand rooms. Notice the bricked-in Gothic arches cut off in the middle. Originally these three rooms were double their present height and formed one single great hall added to the original Arab fort and known as the Saló del Tinell (from an Italian word, *tinello*, meaning 'place where one eats'). Like a similar medieval hall (on which it was loosely modelled) in Barcelona's Museu de d'Història de la Ciutat, this was used as a giant banqueting and ceremonial hall. After the roof collapsed in 1578, the Spanish king Felipe II had the area split horizontally in half, creating two floors. The rooms are graced by period furniture, tapestries and other curios. The following six bare rooms and terrace belonged to the original Arab citadel.

In the main courtyard, or **Patio de Armas**, troops would line up for an inspection and parade before heading out into the city. The lion fountain in its centre is one of the palace's rare Arab remnants. Up the grand Royal Staircase are the royal apartments, a succession of lavishly appointed rooms (look up to the beautiful coffered timber *artesonado* ceilings), whose centrepiece is the **Saló Gòtic**, the upper half of the former Saló del Tinell, where you can see where those Gothic arches wind up. Next door to the apartments is the royal **Capella de Sant'Anna**, a Gothic chapel whose entrance is a very rare Mallorcan example of late Romanesque in rose and white marble.

After the death of Jaume III in 1349, no king lived here permanently again. The palace housed governors, lieutenants or monarchs passing through. It also housed courts and military governors.

In the shadow of the Almudaina's walls, along Avinguda d'Antoni Maura, is **S'Hort del Rei** (the King's Garden). It is not as green as it perhaps once was, but the shady benches are a nice spot to take a load off. Near here is a grand arch, the **Arc del Wali**, one of the city's few reminders of its Arab past. When the Riera, the city's river, coursed along what is now Passeig d'es Born and the sea lapped the city walls, this was the seaward entrance into the Arab palace and early shipyards. For another rare remnant of Arab days, head up Avinguda d'Antoni Maura from the Arc del

Wali to Plaça de la Reina, then south through a series of three uneven arches into Carrer de la Mar. Together they form the **Porta de l'Almudi**, a Muslim-era gate.

MUSEU DIOCESÀ

Opened in 2007 in its magnificent new home of the Palau Episcopal (bishop's residence), the **Museu Diocesà** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 213100; Carrer del Mirador 5; admission €3; 🕒 10am-2pm Tue-Fri) is a fascinating excursion for those interested in Mallorca's Christian artistic history.

The first thing you see is a mind-boggling **retaula** (*retablo* in Spanish, an altarpiece) depicting the Passion of Christ (c 1290-1305) and taken from the Convent de Santa Clara (p77). The characters are in medieval dress (no-one much knew how people looked or dressed in preceding centuries) and the episodes are shown with effusive detail: Palm Sunday, the Last Supper, St Peter's kiss of betrayal. Christ flailed looks utterly unperturbed, while the image of his being nailed to the cross is unsettling. Off to the right, a key work is Francesc Comes' *St Jaume de Compostela* (St James, known to the Spaniards as the Moor-slayer). Pere Niçard's *Sant Jordi* (St George), done around 1468-70, is remarkable for its busy detail. The City of Mallorca (Palma) is shown in the background as St George despatches the dragon. Below this painting is a scene by Niçard and his boss Rafel Mòger depicting the 1229 taking of Palma. The final room in this wing is the Gothic **Oratori de Sant Pau**, a small chapel. The stained glass window was a trial run done by Gaudí in preparation for the windows he did in the Cathedral.

Now backtrack and walk through a succession of rooms past works by anonymous and key Mallorquin artists such as Pere Terrens and Mateu López (father and son). Also here is an 18th-century statue of St Dominic, one of the few remnants of the grand Dominican monastery destroyed in the heart of Palma in the mid-19th century. Upstairs is a thin collection of baroque art, ceramics (mostly from mainland Spain) and some lovely views out over the bay.

Adjoining the Palau Episcopal is the **Jardí del Bisbe** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Pere Nolasç 6; 🕒 9am-1pm & 3-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat May-Oct, 9am-3pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat Nov-Apr). This modest botanic garden is an oasis of peace. Have a quiet stroll among the palms, pomegranates, water lil-

ies, thyme, artichokes, cumquats, orange and lemon trees and more. Or just sit on a bench and contemplate.

WALLS & PARC DE LA MAR

Most of Palma's defensive walls were destroyed in the late 19th century to allow easier expansion of the city. Only a section of the Renaissance sea wall, the Dalt Murada, remains impressively intact, albeit no longer lapped by the Mediterranean, as a considerable chunk of land has since been won from the sea to create the Passeig Marítim ring road and tree-lined waterfront. Construction of this last section of the city's defensive perimeters began in 1562 and limped along until 1801.

In 1984 the Parc de la Mar (with its artificial lake, fountain and green spaces) was opened. Looking tatty in parts (the white public benches have seen better days), it is still a pleasing part of the view from the stout walls, and a pleasant place for a breezy drink at one of two terrace cafés in summer.

Within a section of the walls at the level of the artificial lake, vaulted chambers once used as barracks have been converted into the **Museu Ses Voltes** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 728739; admission free; 🕒 10am-1.45pm & 5-8.30pm Tue-Sat, 10am-1.45pm Sun & holidays), seat of temporary exhibitions.

PALAU MARCH

For a burst of modern art, try this **mansion** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 711122; www.fundbmarch.es; Carrer de Palau Reial 18; admission €3.60; 🕒 10am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Apr-Oct, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Nov-Mar). Once one of several residences of the phenomenally wealthy March family, this private palace was built in 1939-45 on part of the site occupied by gardens of the demolished Sant Domingo monastery. It boasts an outdoor terrace display of modern sculpture including works by Eduardo Chillida, Henry Moore, Auguste Rodin, Barbara Hepworth, Andrea Alfaro and Pietro Consagra. Centre stage is taken by the enormous *Orgue del Mar* (1973) by Barcelona's Xavier Corberó. It looks like a cross between a sex toy and giant centipede slithering between towers.

Inside is a somewhat disappointing mix. On the ground floor the only permanent item is the extraordinary 18th-century Neapolitan baroque *belén* (nativity scene). Hundreds of incredibly detailed figures, from angels to kings, shepherds to farm animals and market scenes, make up this unique representation of

Christ's birth. Such scenes (although rarely of such quality) are popular in Spain and southern Italy, where they are put on display in the run-up to Christmas. The ground floor is otherwise taken up with temporary exhibitions.

Upstairs, the Barcelona artist Josep Maria Sert (1874-1945) painted the main vault and music room ceiling. The vault is divided into four parts, the first three representing three virtues (audacity, reason and inspiration) and the last the embodiment of those qualities in the form of Sert's client Juan March.

MUSEU DE MUÑECAS

You might want to pop into this odd shop-cum-museum dedicated to old dolls, the **Museu de Muñecas** (Museu de Nines Antigues in Catalan; Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 729850; Carrer del Palau Reial 27; adult/child/under 6yr €3.50/2.50/free; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun). Climb the steep stairs to the shop, where you buy a ticket and are ushered through the back to two rooms jammed with old dolls from all over the world, made of anything from cardboard to porcelain.

In the first room, countless versions of a popular Spanish doll, Mariquita Pérez, which first appeared in 1938 in San Sebastián, steal the show. Many of the dolls in the second room date to the 19th or early 20th centuries. Cardboard Spanish dolls from the 1940s show how tough times were after the Civil War. There is a Portuguese coach driver, or cheeky 'piano dolls' to perch on your Steinway. Or what about the utterly un-PC gollywogs? And what are the tiny dolls with the huge bare breasts all about?

CAN MARQUÉS

Documents trace this **mansion** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 716247; www.casasconhistoria.net; Carrer de Zanglada 2a; adult/student & senior €6/5; 🕒 10am-3pm Mon-Fri, 11am-2pm Sat) to the 14th century, making it one of the oldest as well as one of the most intriguing noble houses in Palma. Gathered around four courtyards and showing elements of Gothic, baroque and even Modernista influences, the house offers a unique insight into how Palma's wealthier citizens lived around the early 20th century. Enter the main *pati* (courtyard) where the family coach once clattered in and climb the Modernista stairway to the main floor of the house, where the public can undertake a circuit through 10 rooms.

The immense **Sala d'Entrada** was a formal reception area and designed to impress the visitor with the owner's evident wealth. Next come three rooms, each used for entertaining guests of differing importance. The last of these, reserved for special guests, connected with the *alcoba*, an opulent looking bedroom that was for show only. Perhaps most interesting are the kitchen (fully equipped and ready for the servants to come and prepare the masters' meals) and dining room (with its washbasin in the corner for cleaning greasy hands).

If you turn left (north) on leaving Can Marqués, you immediately reach Carrer de l'Almudaina and **Can Bordils** (Map pp70-1), a 16th-century mansion with a 17th-century courtyard. It is home to the **Arxiu Municipal** (Carrer de l'Almudaina 9; 🕒 9am-2pm & 4.15-7.45pm Mon-Wed, 9am-2pm Thu-Fri), which sometimes holds temporary exhibitions.

More intriguing for the history buff is the arch across the street to the right (east) of Can Bordils. This **Arco de l'Almudaina** (Map pp70-1) is part of a rare stretch of defensive wall and tower, as you can plainly see from the other side of it. It is said to have been in use from antiquity until about the 13th century. Although largely medieval in appearance, it is almost certain that this was part of the Roman wall.

MUSEU DE MALLORCA

Housed in Ca la Gran Cristiana (aka Palau Aiamans), a rambling ensemble of 17th-century mansions, this **museum** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 717540; Carrer de la Portella 5; 🕒 10am-7pm Tue-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun) holds an extensive collection of archaeological artefacts, religious art, antiques and ceramics.

Much of the museum is temporarily off limits due to ongoing renovation but the archaeological collections are all open. Over 15 rooms, the prehistoric and Talayotic periods of the island are explored. Bones, ceramics, utensils, models of caves and burial chambers are accompanied by explanatory panels in Catalan, Spanish and English. The high point is a collection, in a dark room downstairs, of ancient bronze statuettes. Most date to the 4th century BC and depict warriors and other figures. They were unearthed all over the island.

Next up come Roman ceramics, amphorae, remakes of sunken Roman merchant vessels, tombstones, glassware and the like. A few

Byzantine coins and mosaics survive, along with a thin collection of Arab artefacts, mostly ceramics and funerary calligraphy on stone and timber.

On re-entering the main courtyard, cross to the other side of the building for a modest collection of artworks from the 13th to the 19th centuries. A handful of works by important Mallorquin masters, including Francesc Comes, Rafel Mòger and Pere Terrencs, are scattered among the rest. The collections of 20th-century Mallorcan and Modernista art are still under wraps.

CASA-MUSEU JOAQUIM TORRENTS LLADÓ

This fine old **house** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 729835; Carrer de la Portella 9; adult/student & senior €3/1.80; ☎ 11am-7pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat mid-Jun-mid-Sep, 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat mid-Sep-mid-Jun), with a timber gallery overlooking a courtyard, belonged to the Catalan artist Joaquim Torrents Lladó (1946-93), who moved to Mallorca in the 1960s. The 1st and 2nd levels feature timber floors, 19th-century furniture and a changing display of the painter's work, ranging from portraits to labels for Codorniu champagne. Temporary exhibitions are occasionally staged here too.

BANYS ÀRABS

The **Arab baths** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 721549; Carrer de Serra 7; adult/child €1.50/free; ☎ 9am-7.30pm Apr-Nov, 9am-6pm Dec-Mar) are the single most important remaining monument to the Muslim domination of the island. That is not saying an awful lot. All that remains are two small chambers, one with a domed ceiling supported by a dozen columns. Each of the columns is topped by a different capital: the Muslims were great recyclers and the capitals possibly came from demolished Roman buildings. This was the *caldarium*, or hot bath, while the other room was probably the *tepidarium* (warm bath). Normally there would also have been a third, cold bath, the *frigidarium*. As the Roman terms suggest, the Arabs basically took over a Roman idea, here in Mallorca and throughout the Arab world. These ones probably were not public but attached to a private mansion. The baths are set in a pretty garden, where you can sit and relax.

ESGLÉSIA DE SANTA EULÀLIA

One of the first major churches raised after the 1229 conquest, the **Església de Santa Eulàlia** (Map

pp70-1; ☎ 971 714625; Plaça de Santa Eulàlia 2; ☎ 9am-10.30pm & 5-8pm) is a soaring Gothic structure with a neogothic façade (a complete remake, which was done in 1894-1924). It is the only such church in Mallorca, aside from the Catedral, that has three naves. The baroque *retablo* is rather worn and you can't get to the chapels in the apse.

BASÍLICA DE SANT FRANCESC

Work on this Franciscan **basilica** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 712695; Plaça de Sant Francesc 7; admission €1; ☎ 9.30am-12.30pm & 3.30-6pm Mon-Sat, 9.30am-12.30pm Sun & holidays) began in 1281 in Gothic style and its baroque façade was completed in 1700. It is well worth a visit for the splendid, sunny **Gothic cloister**, a two-tiered, trapezoid affair. The elegant columns in various styles indicate it was some time in the making. The simplest and oldest stretch lies diagonally opposite the entrance, while the most refined and complex columns lie off to the right of the entrance. Inside the lugubrious church, the fusion of styles is clear. The high vaulted roof is classic Gothic, while the glittering, curvaceous high altar is a baroque lollipop, albeit in need of a polish.

In the first chapel (dedicated to Nostra Senyora de la Consolació) on the left in the apse is the church's pride and joy, the tomb of and monument to the 13th-century scholar and evangelist **Ramon Llull** (p37). He is Mallorca's favourite son (apart perhaps from the tennis genius Rafel Nadal, p43). Llull's alabaster tomb is high up on the right. Drop a few coins in the slot for the campaign to have him canonised (he has only made it to beatification). Check out the **Capilla de los Santos Mártires Gorkomienses**, on the right side of the apse. In 1572, 19 Catholics, 11 of them Franciscans, were martyred in Holland. In this much-faded portrayal of the event, you can see them being hanged, disembowelled, having their noses cut off and more.

FROM SANT FRANCESC TO THE CONVENT DE SANTA CLARA

From the Basílica de Sant Francesc, head east along Carrer del Temple. In front of you, where the street bends off to the right, you will make out what was once a medieval Arab gate, the **Porta del Temple**, which was converted into housing in the 19th century.

The Knights Templar who had accompanied Jaume I were granted the right to occupy

an Arab fortress known as the **Almudaina Gumara** at the eastern edge of the city. The extent towers mark what was the inner gate into the fort from the city. The knights were unceremoniously expelled in 1307 and the property taken over by the Knights of St John. In 1811 the monastery and chapel were taken over by the city and for more than 100 years most of it has been occupied by a home for disadvantaged children.

Stroll through the gate (which is due to be restored) and down a quiet lane, flanked by high walls, behind which you can see tree tops. At the end of the lane is the atrium of an early **Gothic chapel** the Templars built. You can, on occasion, wander through the external Romanesque entrance (although everyone will tell you there is *nothing* Romanesque on the island) to inspect the Gothic chapel entrance (also with Romanesque elements, like the columns). Inside is an explanatory display on the history of what is simply known as the **Temple** (Map pp70-1). Getting into the chapel itself is a matter of luck – generally it is closed. If you manage it, you can admire two Romanesque side chapels on either side as you enter. Following on from them is a beguilingly simple, early Gothic single nave.

A short walk north of the Temple would bring you to the **Església de Nostra Senyora del Socors** (Map pp70-1; Plaça de Llorenç Bisbal), with its oddly lofty baroque bell tower.

South along Carrer del Temple you run into another church, the largely baroque **Església de Sant Jeroni** (Map pp70-1; Plaça de Sant Jeroni), part of a convent complex founded in the 15th century. If you manage to get inside (the convent is still home to a handful of cloistered nuns) you will be able to see its Gothic cloister. The church faces the **Antic Col·legi de la Sapiença** (Map pp70-1), a still-functioning seminary across a quiet, narrow square. One block further east and you strike a portion of the Arab city wall (with some heavy blocks from the Roman wall at the base), beyond which is a park named after the city gate that once stood here: **Porta d'es Camp** (Gate of the Countryside). The Muslims knew it as Bab al-Jadid (the New Gate).

Head west along Carrer del Monte-Sion. You could make a quick detour down Carrer d'en Calders and look into the courtyard of **Can Caldés** (Map pp70-1; Carrer del Monte-Sion 3), a noble mansion of Gothic origins (it still retains a few Gothic touches) and a peaceful garden designed in the early 20th-century Modernista style.

Two blocks further west rises the gaudy baroque façade of the **Església del Monti-Sion** (Map pp70-1; Carrer del Monte-Sion; ☎ 5.15-7pm). Converted from a Gothic synagogue (p28), it got a serious baroque makeover, inside and out, in the 16th to 17th centuries. As you wander in, a priest sitting in a booth by the entry may flip a switch and light up the curves'n'swirls baroque *retablo* at the back of the church. Gothic giveaways include the ogive arches in front of the chapels, the key vaulting in the ceiling and the long, low Catalan Gothic arch just inside the entrance. Across the road from the church is a baronial mansion from the same period, the **Cal Baró de Pinopar** (Map pp70-1; Carrer del Monte-Sion 17), whose forbidding appearance was clearly designed to keep nosey parkers at bay. Similarly imposing is the 17th-century **Can Lloeta** (Map pp70-1; Carrer del Monte-Sion 6), two blocks west.

Turn south along the church's flank, right on Carrer de Sant Alonso and left again. You are at the entrance to a dusty expanse, at the rear of which rises the **Convent de Santa Clara** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Can Fonollar 2; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 4.15-6.45pm). The church is a gloomy, neglected baroque affair. Locals prefer to pop into the adjacent building, because the handful of cloistered nuns maintain a centuries-old tradition of baking sweets for sale. You will see a *torno*, a kind of timber turnstile set in a window. Ring for a nun, order what you want and put money into the turnstile. This swivels around and out come your *bocaditos de almendra* (almond nibbles) or *rollitos de anís* (aniseed rolls), at €3 for 200g.

PLAÇA DE LA CORT & AROUND

Dominating the square that has long been the heart of municipal power in Palma is the **Ajuntament** (Cort; Map pp70-1; Plaça de la Cort 1). The baroque façade hides a longer history: the town hall building grew out of a Gothic hospital raised here shortly after the island's conquest. On the top floor of the main façade sits **En Figuera**, as the town clock is affectionately known. The present mechanism dates to 1863 and was purchased in France, but a clock has tolled the hours here for centuries. You can generally enter the foyer only, in which you will see a Gothic entrance, a fine sweeping staircase and, probably, half a dozen *gegants* (huge figures of kings, queens and other characters that are paraded around town on people's shoulders during fiesta) in storage.

The regional parliament of the Balearic Islands is at home in the 1913 Modernista **Círculo Mallorquin** (Carrer del Conquistador) building.

The private **Centre Cultural Contemporani Pelaires** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 720375; www.pelaires.com; Carrer de Can Verí 3; ☎ 10am-1.30pm & 4.30-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1.30pm Sat) is as interesting for its architecture as for its content (rotating art exhibitions). The building, Can Verí, is a beautiful 17th-century town house that was for a while also used as a convent. This narrow pedestrian lane is rather chichi, home to galleries, antique shops and fashion boutiques.

Plaça Major & Around

Plaça Major is a typically Spanish central square, lined with arcades, shops and cafés. Lively by day, it falls eerily silent at night. To the east, Carrer del Sindicat spokes out towards the avenues that mark the limits of historic Palma. It crosses a long-run-down district known as Sa Gerreria, now in upheaval as a major programme of apartment building is in full swing. Off Plaça Major, the shopping boulevard, Carrer de Sant Miquel, leads north towards the vast **Plaça d'Espanya**. Watched over by an equestrian statue of Jaume I El Conqueridor (resting on a stone block that was part of the city walls), it hosts banks, fast-food stores, cafés and a mostly motley late-night crowd. The square is the scene of a market in the run-up to Christmas.

Plaça Major and Carrer de Sant Miquel are on high ground that falls away to the west down to shady Passeig de la Rambla. For simplicity's sake, we have included in this section the northern stretch of the old town contained by the avenues to the north, Passeig de Mallorca to the west and Carrer de l'Unió and Avinguda de Jaume III to the south.

MUSEU D'ART ESPANYOL CONTEMPORANI

This 18th-century **mansion** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 713515; www.march.es/arte/palma; Carrer de Sant Miquel 11; admission free; ☎ 10am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am-2pm Sat) makes a good introduction to Spanish modern art. On permanent display are some 70 pieces (held by the Fundación Juan March), a veritable who's who of mostly 20th-century artists. The collection starts with the big guns of the first half of the 20th century, such as Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Juan Gris (of Cubism fame), the sculptor Julio González and Salvador Dalí.

Various movements in Spanish art follow, such as that inspired in Barcelona by the *Dau al Set* review (1948-53) and led by Antoni Tàpies. Meanwhile, in Valencia, Eusebi Sempere and Andreu Alfaro were leading the way down abstract paths. Sempere's *Las Cuatro Estaciones* (1980), in a series of four panels with interlocking shapes made of fine lines, reflects the four seasons in subtle changes of colour. Other names to watch for are Manuel Millares, Fernando Zóbel and Miquel Barceló, who is represented by a huge ceramic pot with bulging skull shapes (*Grand Pot avec Crânes sur une Face*, 2000) and a canvas, *La Flaque* (The Puddle, 1989).

ESGLÉSIA DE SANT MIQUEL & AROUND

Raised after the conquest of Mallorca, the **Església de Sant Miquel** (Church of St Michael; Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Miquel 21; ☎ 9.30am-1.30pm & 5-7.30pm) is a striking mix. It was one of the first four churches built on the site of the mosque where the island's first Mass was celebrated on 31 December 1229. The façade and entrance, with its long, low arch, is a perfect example of 14th-century Catalan Gothic. The squat, seven-storey belltower is also a Gothic creation. Otherwise, the church, with its barrel-vaulted ceiling, is largely the result of a baroque makeover.

Further up Carrer de Sant Miquel, on the right as you make for Plaça d'Espanya, the **Claustre de Sant Antoniet** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Miquel 30; ☎ 10am-1.30pm & 5-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1.30pm Sat) is a baroque gem that belongs to the BBVA bank. The two-tiered, oval-shaped enclosure was built in 1768 and is now used for temporary art exhibitions. It was originally attached to the **Església de Sant Antoni de Viana** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Miquel s/n; ☎ 11am-1pm) next door. Augustinian fathers occupied this site from shortly after the 1229 conquest, but this church was built in 1757 to 1768. The unusual interior is a series of ellipses.

About 200m north stands the **Església de Santa Caterina de Siena** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Miquel 48). As testimony to the ebbing of Catholic fervour in Spain, it has been handed over to the Russians for use as an Orthodox church.

CASAL BALAGUER

This somewhat neglected building with the grand if unevenly cobbled courtyard, graced by four thin, leaning palms, is home to a faded but weighty art institution, the **Círculo**

de Bellas Artes (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 723112; Carrer de l'Unió 3; ☎ 11am-1.30pm & 5.30-8.30pm Tue-Fri, 11am-1.30pm Sat during exhibitions only). Art exhibitions are occasionally held here.

CAIXAFORUM

This **exhibition centre** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 178500; www.lacaixa.es/ObraSocial; Plaça de Weyler 3; ☎ 10am-9pm Tue-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun) is run by one of Spain's biggest building societies, the Barcelona-based La Caixa. CaixaForum is housed in the wonderful Modernista building (the island's first) that once was home to the Grand Hotel, a city landmark that was built in 1900-03 by the Catalan master architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner and the first building in Palma with electricity and a lift. The hotel was shut down during the Civil War and never recovered. As well as the art exhibitions, lectures, workshops, film cycles, concerts and other activities are frequently put on. Pick up a free programme at reception.

Locals flock to the ground-level **café** (☎ 971 728077; ☎ 9am-10pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun).

FUNDACIÓ SA NOSTRA

The big Balearics building society, Sa Nostra, has a **cultural foundation** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 725210; www.sanostra.es; Carrer de la Concepció 12; admission free; ☎ 10.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am-1.30pm) in Can Castelló, where it stages exhibitions. It is worth popping by just to look at the fine 18th-century courtyard. The original house dates to the previous century, and it even has a few Modernista touches from renovation work done in 1909. At the time of writing it was closed for further renovation. Just in front of it is **Font del Sepulcre** (Well of the Sepulchre), a Gothic baptismal font left over from a long-disappeared church. Inside it is a 12th-century Muslim-era well. Carrer de la Concepció used to be known as Carrer de la Monederia, as the Kingdom of Mallorca's mint was on this street.

MONESTIR DE LA PURÍSSIMA CONCEPCIÓ DE LES CAPUTXINES

Behind the forbidding walls of this **convent** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 720720, 636 430000; Carrer de les Caputxines 14) lives a small community of Clarisan nuns. By tradition they still wash and iron delicate clothing, especially first communion and baptism outfits, for a modest fee. It is possible to visit with the Itineraris Culturals guided visits (see p85). Otherwise, if you happen to see the

church doors open (around the 8am or 5pm Mass is the best bet), wander in and see if you can at least make it to the cloister.

CARRER DE SANT JAUME

Despite its baroque façade, the **Església de Sant Jaume** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de St Jaume 10; ☎ 11.30am-1.30pm & 5.30-8.30pm) is one of Palma's older surviving Gothic churches, a grey soaring eminence, and one of the first four parish churches to be built, from 1327 'under the protection of the Royal House of Mallorca'. It is said that the Bonaparte family (later better known as Bonaparte) lived around here until they moved to Corsica in 1406. Napoleon could have been a Mallorquin!

At the northern end of the road rises the baroque **Església de Santa Magdalena** (Map pp70-1; Plaça de Santa Magdalena; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 5.30-7.30pm Mon-Sat). Its main claim to fame is as the resting place of Santa Catalina Thomàs of Valldemossa (p115). Her clothed remains are visible through a glass coffin held in a chapel to the left of the altar and are an object of pilgrimage. They say the future saint sat weeping by a great clump of stone one day as none of the convents would accept her because she was too poor. Then someone told her that the convent once attached to the Església de Santa Magdalena would take her in. She was overjoyed. The stone in question is now imbedded in the rear wall of the 14th-century **Església de Sant Nicolau** on Plaça del Mercat.

CENTRE CULTURAL LA MISERICÒRDIA & AROUND

This enormous complex mostly contains offices and a soothing garden facing Passeig de La Rambla. A former chapel, accessed from the other side, is now used as a temporary **exhibition space** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 718053; Carrer de la Misericòrdia 2; ☎ 10am-1pm & 4-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat). From Plaça de l'Hospital you can also enter the huge courtyard, at the far end of which is the rather eccentric **Museu de l'Esport** (☎ 971 219620; Plaça de l'Hospital 4; ☎ 9am-2pm Mon-Fri), dedicated to Mallorcan sportsmen and sports-women. For the low-down on everything from tennis champion Rafel Nadal to local kayaking heroes, this is the place to come. Follow the signs and take the lift to the second floor, where the museum looks like just another office.

Within the **Hospital General** (founded in the 16th century), on the same square, you can

behold the Gothic façade of the **Església de Sant Crist de la Sang** (Map pp70-1; Plaça de l'Hospital; ☎ 7.30am-1pm & 4-8pm Mon-Fri, 7.30am-1pm & 5-8pm Sat, Sun & holidays). The church is the object of pilgrimage and devotion, since the *paso* (a sculpted image used in processions) of 'Holy Christ of the Blood' is considered to be miraculous. If you happen on a Mass, it is moving to see the devotion of the faithful who climb up behind the altar to venerate the image of Christ crucified, with long, flowing *real* hair and embroidered loincloth. Just on your left as you enter the church is a 15th-century Nativity scene, probably imported from Naples.

Es Puig de Sant Pere

Passeig d'es Born is capped by Plaça del Rei Joan Carles I (named after the present king and formerly after Pope Pius XII), a traffic roundabout locally known as Plaça de les Tortugues, because of the obelisk placed on four bronze turtles. This is where rowdy RCD Mallorca football fans come to celebrate their exploits in the field. A block from here on the

east side of the avenue, on the corner of Carrer de Jovellanos, the distorted black face of a Moor, complete with white stone turban, is affixed high on the corner of a building. Known as the **Cap del Moro** (Moor's Head), it represents a Muslim slave who is said to have killed his master, a chaplain, in October 1731. The slave was executed and his hand lopped off and reportedly attached to the wall of the house where the crime was committed. Chronicles claim the withered remains of the hand were still in place, behind a grille, in 1840!

Passeig d'es Born is like Barcelona's La Rambla, albeit considerably quieter. Like La Rambla, it follows what was the natural course of the city's modest stream (more a sewage outflow than river). While in Barcelona the stream was eventually built over, here it was diverted beyond the then city walls (along Passeig de Mallorca).

ES BALUARD

A stroll west along Carrer de Sant Pere from Plaça de la Drassana (named after the ship-

building yards that once stood here) takes you past tightly packed houses to one of the great surviving corner bastions of the Renaissance-era seaward walls. **Es Baluard** (Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani; Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 908200; www.esbaluard.org; Porta de Santa Catalina 10; adult/student & senior €6/4.50, temporary exhibitions €4/3; ☎ 10am-10pm Tue-Sun mid-Jun-Sep, 10am-8pm Tue-Sun Oct-mid-Jun), a modern and contemporary art museum, now lives here.

A 21st-century concrete complex has been cleverly built in and among the fortifications, which include the partly restored remains of an 11th-century Muslim-era tower (on your right as you arrive from Carrer de Sant Pere). The effect is a playful game of light, surfaces and perspective. Before you enter, contemplate the views of the port and city.

Inside, the ground floor houses the core of the permanent exhibition, starting with a section on Mallorcan landscapes by local artists and others from abroad. Some of the most idyllic, filled with uplifting, ochre-tinged Mediterranean light, are those by the Catalan Modernista artist Santiago Rusiñol, who did a

lot of work in and around the town of Bunyola (midway between Palma and Sóller). A broad swathe of local and mostly Catalan landscape artists are also on show here (see also p41).

Next comes a mixed and revolving international bag of mostly 20th-century artists. Canvases on display can range from the pointillism of Edouard Vuillard to the disturbing works of Oskar Kokoschka, from the calm of René Magritte nudes to the giant collages of Antoni Tàpies. Also on show are some works by Miró, ceramics by Picasso and a cabinet of drawings and sketches by key artists ranging from Henri Matisse to Amedeo Modigliani. Overall the collection is intriguing rather than a must-see on the international gallery circuit.

Before, during or after the visit, take a seat at the Café Bar Marítim, a great snack location on the ramparts.

CASAL SOLLERIC

This grand 18th-century baroque mansion (Map pp70-1) with the typical Palma courtyard of graceful broad arches and uneven stone

EXPLORING PALMA'S HISTORIC COURTYARDS

Born of the necessities of a hot Mediterranean and Middle Eastern climate, the typical privileged Roman *domus* (house) was built around one or more cool courtyards. The Muslim Arabs continued the practice and the Christian conquerors of Arab Spain saw no reason not to adopt the system. The *patio andaluz* (Andalucian courtyard) is today something of a call sign for that southern Spanish region.

In Mallorca nobles and wealthy merchants from the time of Jaume I's conquest onward continued the tradition. The Gothic houses of the well-to-do maintained the idea of a cool, plant-filled central courtyard, around which the rest of the house was built. Access from the street was via a narrow entrance, and a stone external staircase led up to the first (or noble) floor of the house. Enormous change came with the baroque style of the 17th and 18th centuries. Entrances were widened to allow the entry of coaches and horses and designs were more voluptuous.

These great houses, around 150 in Palma, belonged to the *crème de la crème* of society: nobles, landed gentry, judges, businessmen and so on. The Mallorcan *patis* (courtyard) was not merely a pleasant private space. It often had a semi-public role. Prominent families maintained armies of servants, who tended to hang about in the courtyard. Even former employees would drop by. Frequently the *patis* was treated as a public meeting place. Neighbours would pop in for a chat or to take shelter from heat or rain.

Today the doors to quite a few such *patis* are opened by day, although often you cannot walk in far off the street. The tourist office has lists of the more interesting ones. In late spring around 50 are opened for guided visits and concerts in the context of the Corpus Christi celebrations (see p85).

Among the more interesting *patis* to look out for:

- **Can Salas** (Can Jordà; Map pp70-1; Carrer de la Puresa 2), whose entrance could be the oldest in the city
- **Can Catlar del Llorer** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Can Savellà 15), one of the few that is largely Gothic (the narrow entrance and octagonal columns are giveaways) in a street jammed with mansions
- **Can Oleza** (Map pp70-1; Carrer d'en Morey 9), which boasts a series of broad arches and tubby baroque columns

- **Can Vivot** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Can Savellà 4), with loping arches on round pillars; frequently closed
- **Can Berga** (Map pp70-1; Plaça del Mercat 12), since 1942 the Palacio de Justicia (courts)
- **Can Marqués** (p75)
- **Casa-Museu Joaquim Torrents Lladó** (p76)

Others open to the public because they house museums, public offices and the like:

- **Museu de Mallorca** (p75)
- **Centre Cultural Contemporani Pelaires** (p78)
- **Casal Balaguer** (p78)
- **Fundació Sa Nostra** (p79)
- **Casal Solleric** (above)
- **Estudi Lul-lià de Mallorca** (p84)
- **Can Bordils** (p75)
- **Can Caldés** (p77)

Other favourites:

- **Can Forteza del Sitjar** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de la Concepció 24)
- **Can Alemany** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de l'Estudi General 5)
- **Can Espanya-Serra** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de la Portella 8)
- **Cal Marquès del Palmer** (Map pp70-1; Carrer del Sol 7), with a unique sculpted Renaissance façade
- **Can Zagranada** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Gran Granada 10)
- **Cal Comte de San Simón** (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Jaume 7), radically different from the traditional mansions of Palma; this one was built in 1854-56 in neoclassical style

paving is at once a **cultural centre** (☎ 971 722092; Passeig d'es Born 27; ☎ 10am-2pm & 5-9pm Tue-Sat, 10am-1.30pm Sun), bookshop and tourist information office. Displays are usually free and found over a couple of floors. The part facing Passeig d'es Born was actually the rear of the original house, built in 1763. Archduke Ludwig Salvador thought its courtyard 'one of the most beautiful in Palma'.

SA LLOTJA

The gorgeous, if weather-beaten, 15th-century sandstone Gothic **Sa Llotja** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 711705; Plaça de la Llotja s/n; ☎ 11am-1.45pm & 5-8.45pm Tue-Sat, 11am-1.45pm Sun for exhibitions only), opposite the waterfront, was built as a merchants' stock exchange and is used for temporary exhibitions. Designed by Guillem Sagrera (see p39), it is the apogee of civilian Gothic building on the island and was completed in 1450. Inside, six slender, twisting columns lead to the lofty vaulted ceiling. In each corner of the building rises a fanciful octagonal tower. The flanks are marked with huge arches, fine tracery and monstrous-looking gargoyles leaning out overhead.

CONSOLAT DE MAR

Virtually next door to Sa Llotja, the Consolat de Mar (Map pp70-1) was founded in 1326 as a maritime tribunal. The present building, one of Mallorca's few examples of (albeit impure) Renaissance design, was completed in 1669. It was tacked onto, and faces, a late-Gothic chapel completed around 1600 for the members of Sa Llotja. The Consolat de Mar houses the presidency of the Balearic Islands regional government.

ESGLÉSIA DE SANTA CREU

Work on this much-neglected Gothic **church** (☎ 971 712690; Carrer de Sant Llorenç 1; admission €3; ☎ 11am-12.30pm Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri), just downhill from what was once the Santa Catalina gate, began in 1335. The main entrance (Carrer de Santa Creu 7) is a baroque addition. What makes it interesting is the Cripta de Sant Llorenç (crypt of St Lawrence), an early Gothic place of worship dating possibly to the late 13th century. Some paintings by Rafel Mòger and Francesc Comes are scattered about the interior. You can peer into it from windows on the street. In spite of the official timetable, the museum seems to be eternally shut.

Santa Catalina & Around

A curious district of long, grid-pattern streets and traditional low-slung one- and two-storey houses, Santa Catalina was for a long time a somewhat raggedy and even dodgy part of town. In recent years it has known something of a renaissance as a cheerful wining and dining area. There are no real sights but it is interesting to walk around for the atmosphere, especially around lunchtime and on weekend evenings.

Essentially a mariners' district until recent years, it was not officially constituted as the *barri* (district) of Santa Catalina until 1865.

A hospital (since demolished) was built in the 14th century in this then wide-open area and ministered to ill and impoverished mariners. As early as the 17th century, windmills were raised in the area (still known as Es Jonquet) south off Carrer de Sant Magi, the oldest street in the *barri*. Es Jonquet remains a world unto itself, with modest houses (some old and done up, others abandoned and some replaced by soulless modern affairs) and a couple of ruined windmills that pumped potable water into the higher parts of this district until 1900. A series of four windmills (now converted into bars and restaurants) lines Carrer de l'Indústria. One of them dates from around 1644.

From 1904, the now shuttered-up **Hostal Cuba**, on the corner of Carrer de Sant Magi and Avinguda d'Argentina, was a reference point for sailors, fishermen and other folks who slept here overnight or simply came for a drink. Depending on whom you talk to, its corner tower is reminiscent of a lighthouse or minaret. Across Avinguda d'Argentina, the **Sa Feixina** (or Faixina) park was long a parade and training ground for troops. It is home to a monument inaugurated by General Franco to the casualties of the Nationalist cruiser *Baleares*, sunk by Republican forces on 6 March 1938. Of the crew, 788 died and 469 survived (some saved by neutral UK destroyers patrolling in the vicinity).

Passeig Marítim & Western Palma

Western Palma boasts a handful of sights. The Castell de Bellver is the most worthwhile, if only for the views. Night owls will get to know the Passeig Marítim for its bars and club scene.

POBLE ESPANYOL

This **Spanish Village** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 737075; Carrer del Poble Espanyol 39; adult/student & senior €5/3;

MEANDERING PAST MODERNISTA GEMS

Palma is sprinkled with eye-catching buildings that resulted from the strange and fecund, if brief, period of architectural imagination known as Modernisme. For more on this flourishing movement at the turn of the 20th century, see p40.

Examples are the former **Grand Hotel** (CaixaForum; p79), the pastry shop, **Forn des Teatre** (p89), the nearby twin buildings of **Can Casasayas**, the undulating **Can Corbella**, **Can Forteza Rey** (Can Rei) and adjacent **Almacenes El Àguila** (p40).

The **Palma-Sóller train station** (Map pp70-1) was also built in this style in 1912. Several buildings on nearby Plaça d'Espanya, including **Bar Cristal** (Map pp70-1; Plaça d'Espanya 4) betray Modernista influences. The more you wander around with an attentive eye, the more examples, often minor, you will turn up.

☎ 9am-7pm Apr-Sep, 9am-6pm Oct-Mar) imitates a similar institution in Barcelona, which in turn is a copy of bits of Spanish towns from all over the country. It's cheesy but intriguing and contains replicas of everything from typical Andalusian streets to Canary Islands houses, from the grand Bisagra gate of Toledo to Granada's Muslim Alhambra. Most of the replicas are smaller than the originals but could inspire one to travel further afield in Spain. You will also find shops, a couple of bars and eateries and even a pair of language schools. Buses 5, 29 and 46 take you close (alight at Avinguda d'Andrea Doria 41).

CASTELL DE BELLVER

Set atop a pleasant park, the **Castell de Bellver** (Bellver Castle; ☎ 971 730657; Carrer de Camilo José Cela s/n; adult/senior & student €2/1; ☎ 8am-8.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-7pm Sun & holidays Apr-Sep, 8am-7.15pm Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm Sun & holidays Oct-Mar) is a 14th-century circular castle (with a unique round tower), the only one of its kind in Spain. Parts of the castle are shut on Sunday. Jaume II ordered the castle built atop a hill known as Puig de Sa Mesquida in 1300 and it was largely complete 10 years later. It was conceived above all as a royal residence but seems to have been a white elephant, as only King Sanç (in 1314) and Aragón's Joan I (in 1395) moved in for any amount of time. In 1717 it became a prison.

The best part of a visit is to mosey around the castle and enjoy the views over the surrounding woods to Palma and out to sea. The ground-floor **Museu d'Història de la Ciutat** (City History Museum) couldn't be less interesting; it's basically just some explanatory panels and a modest collection of pottery. Upstairs you can visit a series of largely empty chambers, including the one-time kitchen. Three rooms are given over to a desultory collection of clas-

sical statuary assembled by Cardenal Antoni Despuig (1745-1813). Climb to the roof and check out the prisoners' graffiti etched into the stonework. Unfortunately, more recent visitors have felt fit to add their own immortal traces.

About the nearest you can get to the castle by bus (3, 46 or 50) is Plaça Gomila, from where you'll have to hoof it about 15 minutes (1km) up a steep hill.

CASTELL DE SANT CARLES

More of a fort, the St Charles 'Castle' is home to the **Museu Històric Militar** (☎ 971 402145; Carretera del Dic de l'Oest s/n; ☎ 9am-1pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat). The great guns in camouflage paint indicate you have reached the stellar-shaped fortress overlooking Porto Pi. It was built in 1610 to 1612 and later expanded. Its principal task was the protection of the approaches to Palma. Inside, the display contains some of the usual suspects for this kind of museum: plenty of weaponry (swords, pistols, rifles from many eras and countries), uniforms, flags, battle dioramas and so on. In Room 3 is a special section dedicated to Palma-born General Weyler, known for his harsh (and ultimately futile) campaign to crush rebellion in Cuba (1895-98).

Es Portitxol, Es Molinar & Ciutat Jardí

Virtually in front of Avinguda de Gabriel Alomar, at the edge of Palma's historic centre, starts a pleasant, artificial beach, **Platja de Can Pere Antoni**. Within walking distance of the city centre, it is not bad for a morning dip. Below the waterfront apartments is a series of restaurants and cafés.

A 1km walk from the city centre end of the beach brings you to **Es Portitxol**. The 'little port' has a quiet abundance of pleasure craft

and is closed off inland by the motorway (at a discreet distance). You can walk, cycle or rollerblade here along the Passeig Marítim from central Palma. The main attraction is a snazzy hotel-restaurant, Hotel Portixol (p88).

Not far inland from Es Portixol spreads the dishevelled **Parc Kristian Krekovic**. The **Museu Krekovic** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 219606; Carrer de Ciutat de Querétaro 3; adult/child €1.80/0.45; ☎ 9.30am-1pm & 3-6pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am-1pm Sat, closed Aug) looks on to the park and is dedicated to the work of eccentric Bosnian artist Kristian Krekovic (1901-85), who spent the last 25 years of his life in Mallorca after a long period studying the Incas and Peruvian tribes. The result is three rooms of monumental canvases in a thunder-and-lightning crash of colour. They mostly depict ancient warriors, chiefs, virgins, musicians and masked figures. Bus 12 runs close by.

From Es Portixol, continue walking around the next point and enter **Es Molinar**. This simple, waterfront 'suburban' district of low fishing folks' houses has become a dining haunt, with a handful of places at the Es Portixol end. Walk along the waterfront cycle path, among snippets of protected beach. The area is marked off to the east by a stream, the Torrent Gros. Over the bridge is **Ciutat Jardí**, a low-key residential area with a broad, sandy beach. The area was created as 'garden city' from 1917, along the lines of British concepts for green residential areas. It was dominated by the luxury **Hotel Ciutat Jardí**, built in 1921 to 1922 in imitation of part of a maharaja's palace in Tripura (India). The beach is great for kids as the water is calm and there are loads of swings and other distractions just off the beachside promenade. Some good restaurants make the idea of a quiet day here tempting. A walk beyond the beaches takes you to the next bay, **Cala Gamba**, a marina with a scruffy beach.

ACTIVITIES

The easiest 'activity' is going to the beach. For city beaches, see p92). **Platja de Palma** and **S'Arenal** (p101) together form an almost 5km-long white strand. The little coves and beaches west of the city, starting with Cala Major, are pretty (their backdrop isn't always so). If all that sand seems too much trouble, pop by **Aquamar Spa Center** (☎ 971 456612; www.aquamarcenter.com; Carrer de Fray Luis de León 5; admission €12-58; ☎ 10am-9pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun except Jul-Aug) for

a circuit of spa baths, massage and more. Depending on the services you want to use you may need to book ahead.

Various boat cruises are available. Some are detailed in the *Excursions En Barca* brochure, available at tourist offices. **Cruceiros Iberia** (☎ 971 717190; ☎ Tue, Thu & Fri mid-May-mid-Oct) organises day trips to Sant Elm (p110), leaving at 9.30am and returning at 3pm (the trip takes two hours each way), for €52.50 per person including lunch and hotel transfers.

Attraction (☎ 971 227702; www.attractioncatamarans.com) does catamaran trips to Ca'n Pastilla by day (€50 a head) and Magaluf by night (€55 a head). The latter is basically a party excursion.

Marenostrum (☎ 971 456182; www.marenostrum-catamarans.com) puts on a daily catamaran tour (from May to October) to either Portals Vells (p9) or Cala Vella (depending on wind direction), just east of the Badia de Palma. The trip (€53 per person) includes food on board and snorkelling gear.

For a quick one-hour whiz around the bay (for info call ☎ 659 636775), there are departures from the same spot three to five times a day, Monday to Saturday (March to October) for €9 per person.

Boats leave from in front of the Auditorium (Map pp66-7) and tickets for most tours are available at a booth near the embarkation point.

COURSES

Palma is a great town to live in for a while, and what better way to get involved than by taking up a class? Many of the town hall's district cultural centres offer evening courses at low cost for long-termers. For a list go to the English-language page of the **Universitat de les Illes Balears** website (☎ 971 173380; www.uib.es/en; Carretera de Valldemossa Km7.5) and click on 'Spanish Courses' and then on 'Other Spanish Courses'. The university itself offers various semester courses of Spanish for foreigners, as well as intensive summer courses (€400 for 60 hours' tuition). Other options:

Dialog (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 719994; www.dialog-palma.com; Carrer del Carme 14), the predominantly German language bookshop, offers two-week intensive Spanish courses (€350).

The **Estudi Lul·lià de Mallorca** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 711988; www.estudigeneral.com; Carrer de Sant Roc 4) offers intensive summer courses in Spanish language and culture (€400).

GALLERY ALLEY

Contemporary art enthusiasts will get a buzz out of the plethora of galleries that populate the narrow streets just west of the Passeig d'es Born. Top art houses include:

- **Sala Pelaires** (☎ 971 723696; www.pelaires.com; Carrer de Pelaires 5) An arm of the Centre Cultural Contemporani Pelaires (p78) and Palma's first contemporary gallery, this is a wonderful place to see works by top Spanish artists.
- **Galeria La Caja Blanca** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 722364; www.lacajablanca.com; Carrer de Can Verí 9) Egly Mallorcan and international artists are showcased in this stark, minimalist space.
- **Joan Guaita Art** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 715989; Carrer de Can Verí 10) This sleek gallery is well known for its emphasis on contemporary Latin American artists.

Die Akademie (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 718290; www.dieakademie.com; Carrer de Morei 8) runs a variety of Spanish language courses and is housed in a late-Gothic mansion.

Marc Fosh, who runs the Michelin-star Reads in Santa Maria del Camí (p153), also heads up the gourmet laboratory **Fosh Food** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 290108; www.foshfood.com; Carrer de Blanquerna 6). Cooking classes by various chefs, local and international, are held most days and cost €45 to €60. Book ahead. It doubles as a gourmet delicatessen and is curiously surrounded by a sushi bar, self-proclaimed Thai fusion restaurant and Indian eatery!

Want to learn to be a yacht or catamaran skipper in the Med? **Voyage** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 222907; www.voyageseaschool.com; Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 4) runs courses in conjunction with the UK Royal Yachting Association.

PALMA FOR CHILDREN

With the city's beaches and related water activities (including boat tours) an easy option, Palma should be stress-free for kids and their adult guardians. Children will love to explore the Bellver and Sant Carles castles (p83 and p83); you can combine art with fun on the ramparts at Es Baluard (p80); and young girls and boys might find the Museo de Muñecas (p75) intriguing. See also the aqua parks and other theme parks on p104.

Sets of swings, climbing things and other diversions for young children are scattered about town. There is an immense assortment in Parc de les Estacions (Map pp70-1), near the bus station, and another good set in Sa Feixina park near Es Baluard (Map pp66-7). You'll stumble across more swings in the shadow of Palau de l'Almudaina (Map pp70-1) and further along near the walls just east of Parc de la Mar (Map pp70-1).

For information on babysitting services, see p196.

TOURS

Itineraris Culturals (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 720720, 646 430000; www.itineraris.org; Carrer de Sant Domingo 11) offers a series of themed walks around Palma. The walks range from tours of the courtyards of fine mansions to specialised tours for the hearing-impaired. In general the tours take two hours and cost €10 a head. Themes include Monumental Palma, the Jewish Quarter (Call), The City and the Sea, Modernisme in Palma, Stories and Legends of Palma (night tour), Tradition and Modernity: Traditional Trade in Palma, and a special tour of the still-functioning Convent de les Monges Caputxines (October to May only; see also p79).

The hop-on-hop-off **Palma City Sightseeing** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 902 101081; www.mallorcaatour.com) circuit bus (Bus 50, 16 stops, €13) has the option of commentary in various languages. Tickets are valid for 24 hours. The bus departs from Avinguda d'Antoni Maura. The service runs every 20 minutes, starts at 10am and stops anytime between 6pm and 10pm depending on the time of year.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

In addition to regular sailing events (p97), the city seems caught up in a near endless parade of cultural events (get information from tourist offices), ranging from local traditions to international performance.

Festa de Sant Sebastià (19-20 January) On the eve of the feast day of Palma's patron saint, concerts (from funk to folk) are staged in the city squares, along with flaming pyres and the *aiguafoc*, a fireworks display over the bay. It's a big (if chilly) night.

Sa Rueta & Sa Rua (February) Palma's version of Carnaval (celebrated in the last days before Lent starts) involves

a procession for kids (Sa Rueta) followed later by a bigger one (Sa Rua) with floats and the like.

Semana Santa (March–April) Processions dot the Easter Week calendar, but the most impressive are those on Holy Thursday evening. In the *Processó del Sant Crist de la Sang* (Christ of the Blood), robed and hooded members of *confraries* (lay brotherhoods) parade with a *paso* (heavy sculpted image of Christ, borne by a team of men). It starts at 7pm in the *Església del Crist de la Sang* (Map pp70–1), where the *paso* is kept, and returns hours later.

Festival Mundial de Danses Folkloriques (www.worldfolkdance.com; April) A five-day folk extravaganza, with dance groups from around the world performing in central Palma's streets and squares.

MUST (www.dissenymallorca.com; April) A three-day fashion fest with parades and workshops in various locations in central Palma.

Saló Nàutic (www.firesicongressos.com; May) Usually held around the first week of May, this is a major boat fair held at the Moll Vell docks.

Corpus Christi (May–June) The feast of the Body of Christ (the Eucharist) falls on the Thursday of the ninth week after Easter, although the main procession from the cathedral takes place on the following Sunday at 7pm. On that day, carpets of flowers are laid out in front of the Cathedral and in *Plaça de la Cort*. Concert cycles (many held in the city's *patis*, which can also be visited at this time) add a celebratory note for about a month around the feast day.

Nit de Sant Joan (June 23) The night before the feast of St John (24 June) is celebrated with fiery feasting. As night falls, the *correfoc* (fire running) begins in the *Parc de la Mar*. People dressed up as demons, and armed with pyrotechnical gear that would probably be illegal in hell, leap and dance in an infernal procession. Locals then head for the beaches, where wandering musical groups and pyres add flaming cheer to a partying crowd until dawn.

Estiu de Cultura (www.palmademallorca.es; July–August) Musical events are held in the *Castell del Bellver*, ranging from classical to flamenco, jazz and Cuban. See the website for dates, prices and where to buy tickets.

Festes de Sant Magí (August 19) A local event in Santa Catalina with music, street theatre and fireworks.

Nits a la Fresca (www.palmademallorca.es; July–August) Catch the open-air cinema, folk music and theatre at a stage set up in *Parc de la Mar*.

Art Cologne (www.artcologne-palma.com; September) In 2007 this German contemporary art fair launched a four-day annual autumn edition in Palma's airport (terminal A).

Jam Art Mallorca (www.jamartmallorca.com; September) A parallel art event to Art Cologne, concentrating on upcoming international talent.

Nit de l'Art (September) A more established art event; galleries and institutions all over town throw open their doors to expose the latest trends in art.

SLEEPING

Where you stay depends on what you want to get out of your visit. The intimate boutique hotels of the city centre (especially those near the *Passeig d'es Born* or around the *Plaça Major*) place you in the thick of the capital's shopping, restaurant and nightlife districts. For views, head to the *Passeig Marítim* or *Passeig de Mallorca*. West of the centre cluster several business hotels; these aren't particularly convenient for sightseers but are practical places to stay if having wi-fi and a work centre are important considerations.

Old Palma

The often hard-to-find hotels dotted throughout Old Palma's historic centre offer a romantic old-world ambience.

Hostal Brondo (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 719043; www.hostalbrondo.net; Carrer de Ca'n Brondo 1; s/d/tr without bathroom €35/50/60, d with bathroom €65) Brondo's high-ceilinged rooms (try to nab No 3, which has a glassed-in gallery) are furnished in styles varying from Mallorcan to vaguely Moroccan. The friendly owners are as good as a tourist office when it comes to giving advice about the city. Downsides include slightly cramped quarters and street noise.

Hotel Dalt Murada (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 425300; www.daltmurada.org; Carrer d'Almudaina 6; r €140-200; ☼) This aristocratic manor-house-turned-hotel dates from 1500 and is filled with art and antique furniture that evoke days gone by. Museum-worthy paintings, chandeliers and canopied beds decorate the rooms, whose ceilings are held up by timber beams. Modern concessions include womb-like Jacuzzis and an elevator.

ourpick **Hotel Palacio Ca Sa Galesa** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 715400; www.palaciocasagalesa.com; Carrer de Miramar 8; s €240, d €300-435; 📶 📺 📺 📺) Staying in this luxurious 12-room hotel is like being a guest in a private, 16th-century Mallorcan mansion. The antique furniture, soaring ceilings and silk wall coverings are truly indulgent, while welcoming living spaces like a stocked reading room, breezy patio and cheery yellow kitchen (where you can help yourself to tea and cake) keep things from getting too stuffy.

Plaça Major & Around

The hotels in this buzzing central quarter stand elbow-to-elbow with upscale shops, terrace cafés and fine restaurants.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Born (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 712942; www.hotelborn.com; Carrer de Sant Jaume; s €50-65, d €73-105) Stepping into this 16th-century *Can Maroto* manor house is like stepping back in time. From the palatial reception area, take the spiral staircase to a red-carpeted hallway where carved wooden doors creak open to reveal simply furnished rooms, whose high ceilings dwarf antique, slightly careworn furniture. For old-world ambience and a central location, look no further.

Hotel Ca Sa Padrina (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 425300; www.hotelcasapadrina.com; Carrer de les Tereses 2; s €80, d €100-120; ☼) Ca Sa Padrina has no reception office, so all communication is via closed-circuit cameras and a telephone with a direct line to the staff of the *Hotel Dalt Murada* (see opposite). A small sign in the lobby reads, 'If the telephone sounds is [sic] because we see you on the camera and we have to talk with you'. Strange. But once you get over the spooky Big Brother feel, this quaint guesthouse is quite nice. Thankfully there are no cameras in the bedrooms, where antique bathtubs, carved wooden beds and views of the old town set a yesteryear tone.

ourpick **Misión de San Miguel** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 214848; www.hotelmisiondesanmiguel.com; Carrer de Can Maçanet 1; r €110-130; 📶 ☼) A shockingly good deal, this 32-room boutique hotel is a real find. We can't help but think that once the word gets out the prices will go up, but for now *Misión* is a steal. The hotel is on a hard-to-find side street off *Carrer dels Oms*, so the stark and spacious rooms are quiet, with free wi-fi, perfectly firm mattresses and rain showers. The restaurant, *Trébol*, serves a fabulous made-to-order breakfast – the omelette is divine – and to top it off you can enjoy perks like free parking and a romantic patio area.

Hotel Jaime III (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 725943; www.hmhotels.net; Passeig de Mallorca 14; r €165; ☼) This urbane hotel overlooking the palm-lined *Passeig de Mallorca* tries a wee bit too hard to be cool, with kitschy art in the lobby and slightly snooty service. But if you're looking for a fashionable, central place at a reasonable price, this is an excellent option. Rooms boast striking wine-red linens, wenge furniture, flat-screen TVs and free wi-fi. Breakfast is not included in the room price.

TOP END

Convent de la Missió (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 227347; www.conventdelamissio.com; Carrer del Convent de la Missió 7; r incl

breakfast €225-390; 📶 ☼) A functioning convent from the 1600s until 2003, this intimate boutique hotel has just 14 rooms and a Zen-like calm created by all-white rooms with wispy curtains and airy spaces. Though there's no pool, couples will enjoy the romantic Arab-style hot tub and sauna located in the stone-walled underground cellar. You can also relax on the rooftop terrace or in the artfully designed reading room. Dine in the stylishly minimalist restaurant, *Refectori* (p90).

Es Puig de Sant Pere

If you stay in this busy, tourist-friendly district, you'll never be more than a few minutes' walk from restaurants, tapas bars and nightclubs.

BUDGET

Hostal Pons (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 722658; Carrer del Vi 8; s/d/tr without bathroom €25/40/60) If you had a Mallorquin grandmother, her house might look like this. The 22 rooms are quaint, if dusty, with creaky 1950s-style twin beds and, for the lucky, views of an interior patio. The kindly owner has been running this place for 50-plus years and still takes reservations on an old black rotary phone. No elevator.

Hostal Apuntadores (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 713491; www.palma-hostales.com; Carrer dels Apuntadors 8; s/d €52/64 without bathroom €33/48; ☼) Right on the main drag (bring earplugs), this unfussy spot makes up for its smallish rooms and lumpy beds with balconies, lots of sunlight and a rooftop terrace that overlooks the cathedral and serves drinks. Wi-fi in reception.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Palau Sa Font (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 712277; www.palauasfont.com; Carrer dels Apuntadors 38; s €90-105, d €145-200; 📶 📺 📺) Tucked away on a quiet side street, this former 16th-century palace offers 19 sparsely decorated rooms. Wrought iron beds and a few splashes of colour in the form of a pale green headboard or a simple red chair give the rooms a feeling of almost monastic calm. Internet connection for laptops.

Hotel Saratoga (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 727240; www.hotelsaratoga.es; Passeig de Mallorca 6; s/d €115/180; 📶 📺) Although not as quaint or intimate as other hotels in the area, this swanky four-star can't be beat for convenience. A great location, sea views, full breakfast buffet, large pool and a fab rooftop terrace with views make it a popular place. Rooms are standard business-style

hotel fodder, with parquet floors and simple white linens. There's free wi-fi throughout the hotel and live jazz in the 7th-storey Blue Jazz Club (p95).

Hotel San Lorenzo (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 728200; www.hotelsanlorenzo.com; Carrer de Sant Llorenç; s €115-165, d €135-185; 🍷 🍷) Just nine rooms are interspersed around the staircases and patios of this old Mallorcan manor house. At the centre is a wonderfully fragrant terrace garden with a pool and marvellous cathedral views; it's practically begging you to watch the sunset with a drink in hand.

TOP END

Hotel Tres (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 717333; www.hoteltres.com; Carrer dels Apuntadors 3; s/d €180/270; 🍷 🍷 🍷) With complimentary slippers and robes in each room, king-sized beds and in-room DVD players, there's no doubt about the Hotel Tres' upscale boutique credentials. The décor mixes urbane and eco-chic, with slate-walled showers, cowhide benches and bamboo plants in the bathrooms. If you want a terrace, request Room 101, 201 or 206. Wi-fi in all rooms.

Puro Oasis Urbano (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 425450; www.purohotel.com; Carrer del Mont Negre 12; s €165-185, d €235-285; 🍷 🍷 🍷) Achingly chic with a décor that crosses Ibiza-style minimalism with Moroccan flair, this 14th-century palace-turned-26-room boutique hotel has positioned itself as the place to see and be seen. By day, lounge on the canopied day beds of the patio or take a dip in the plunge pool; by night join a fashionable crowd for cocktails in the bar. As a guest here, you can also access the Puro Beach (p101) club.

Passeig Marítim & West Palma

Hotels in this area are a 15- to 30-minute walk from the centre (hiring a bike is not a bad idea), but they may be considerably cheaper than city-centre hotels.

AC Ciutat de Palma (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 222300; www.ac-hotels.com; Plaça del Pont 3; r €85-162; 🍷 🍷) The popular business-style hotel chain, AC, has another winner with this reliable four-star hotel a block from the waterfront. Rooms are outfitted with plasma TVs, wi-fi, and a sleek wenge-and-white décor. The look is business chic.

Tryp Bellver (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 222240; www.solmelia.com; Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 11; r €95-130; 🍷 🍷 🍷) The waterfront location and

generous balconies make the Bellver more than just another four-star chain hotel. The decoration of the 381 rooms is nothing special, but with these sigh-inducing views, you won't be paying much attention to the inside anyway.

Hotel Mirador (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 732046; www.hotelmirador.es; Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 10; s/d €100/125; 🍷 🍷 🍷) Overlooking the port and maritime promenade, the Mirador bills itself as a 'classic' hotel. No Nordic minimalism here; rooms are decorated with overstuffed chairs, sensible lamps and yellow bedspreads.

Costa Azul (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 731940; www.hotelcostaazul.es; Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 7; r €180; 🍷 🍷) Right on the waterfront, the Costa Azul is popular with groups, many of them 50-plus, who book it for its breezy, beach-themed rooms with views and competitive rates.

Es Portitxol, Es Molinar & Ciutat Jardí

Although it's a longish walk, bike ride or bus ride from the centre, this is a great place to enjoy Palma's beaches and sunshine.

Hotel Portitxol (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 271800; www.portitxol.com; Carrer de la Sirena 27; s €125, d €210-370; 🍷 🍷) Two kilometres south of Palma's centre is the jewel of this fishing-village-turned-resort: the hip Hotel Portitxol. With a soothing fusion of cool Mediterranean and Scandinavian styles, this harbour-front hotel has been making guests happy for more than 50 years. Most rooms have terraces with sea views, and all are airy, with DVD players and an orderly, minimalist décor.

EATING

A mess of eateries and bars cater to Palma's visitors in the maze of streets between Plaça de la Reina and the port. Or take a look around the *barri* of Santa Catalina, west of Passeig de Mallorca, especially around the east end of Carrer de Sa Fàbrica. Also pleasant are the waterside eateries in Es Portitxol and Es Molinar.

Old Palma

BUDGET

Forn Sant Crist (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 712649; Carrer de Paraires 2) A historic pastry shop where you can pick up all sorts of traditional goodies.

Confiteria Frasquet (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 721354; Carrer d'Orfila 4; ☎ 9.30am-2pm & 4.45-8pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-2pm Sat) Another excellent place to pick up sweet munchies.

MIDRANGE

La Taberna del Caracol (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 714908; Carrer de Sant Alonso 2; meals €25; 🍷 Mon-Sat) Descend three steps into this high-ceilinged Gothic basement. Through a broad vault at the back you can see what's cooking. Dark wooden tables are scattered about. Soothing background music, some fine wine and a delicate assortment of tapas (€11.75 for two) make a great start. You might follow with a tender grilled *dorada* (bream, €15).

Cappuccino (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 717272; Carrer del Conquistador 13; meals €30; ☎ 9am-1am Sun-Thu, 9am-2am Fri & Sat) The location is a winner, a terrace at the 'prow' end of Palau March. You could do a light lunch or dinner, ranging from pumpkin soup starters to pasta mains. Or just settle for a slightly overpriced cappuccino.

Plaça Major & Around

BUDGET

Forn des Teatre (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 715254; Plaça de Weyler 9; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) This pastry shop has feather-weight *ensaimada* (a light, spiral pastry emblematic of the island) and is a historic landmark.

Ca'n Joan de S'Aigo (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 710759; Carrer de Can Sañç 10; hot chocolate €1.40; ☎ 8am-9pm Wed-Mon) For a hot chocolate and fine *ensaimades* (which come with apricots, cream or whipped cream) you have to stop by what might be described as an antique-filled milk bar dating from 1700. The house speciality, however, is *quarts*, a feather-soft sponge cake item with almond-flavoured ice cream (served in a glass with a spoon) that children love to eat. The place fills with families and children from around 6pm.

Sa Pastanaga (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 724194; Carrer de Sant Elies 6b; meals €12.20; ☎ lunch Mon-Fri; ☎ 🍷) Lo-

cals queue here for the nicely priced vegetarian set lunches in this one-time shop. Yellow walls and exposed beams lend a huggy feel to the place. Starters (juice or salad) could be followed by *crema de carbassò i pèsols* (pumpkin and peas with cream) and a main course of *burritos de verdura amb salsa de formatge* (vegetable burritos in a cheese sauce).

Bar España (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 724234; Carrer de Ca'n Escurrat 12; meals €15-20; ☎ 6pm-midnight Mon, 10am-midnight Tue-Sat) Pick your own *pintxos* (Basque Country tapas) at the bar (where you can't smoke) and sample with house wine. Or take them to a table (smoker-friendly). Bullfight posters adorn the walls and it fills to bursting at lunch and on weekend evenings.

S'Espunya Café (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 723701; Carrer del Metge Matas 2; ☎ dinner daily, closed Mon in Aug) A jug of *sangria* and *pa amb oli* (with unusual variants on the theme, such as the *capresse*, a mozzarella and tomato combo), perhaps followed by a little cake, is not a bad way to start the night at this funky eatery.

MIDRANGE

Restaurant Celler Sa Premsa (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 723529; Plaça del Bisbe Berenguer de Palou 8; meals €20-25; ☎ Mon-Sat Sep-Jun, Mon-Fri Jul & Aug) A visit to this local institution is almost obligatory. It's a cavernous tavern filled with huge old wine barrels and has walls plastered with faded bullfighting posters. The food is hearty and the atmosphere jolly.

El Botxo (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 717830; Carrer de Velázquez 14; meals €20-25; ☎ Mon-Sat) This is an amusing barn of a place and not bad for a few *raciones* (smallish dishes about halfway between a main dish and tapas). Most of the tables are equipped with their own beer taps. Set up an account and pour your own as you

DIY MEALS

Palma's produce markets are a great way to get under the skin of the city as you bustle about the fresh produce stands. You can stock up on all you need to put together your own meals, from cheeses and cold meats to fruit and veg (and plenty more if you have access to a stove). The most engrossing is the central **Mercat de l'Olivar** (Map pp70-1; Plaça de l'Olivar), especially good for fish and meat. At lunchtime Monday to Saturday, head here for several lively tapas bars serving fresh food to market workers and shoppers.

Equally busy and with few tourists are the **Mercat de Santa Catalina** (Map pp70-1; Plaça de la Navegació) and **Mercat de Pere Garau** (Map pp66-7; Plaça de Pere Garau). On Saturday mornings the latter is good for gourmet products. Locals who love fresh produce will tell you it is the best market for fruit and vegetables, as this is where farmers from around the island converge with the fruits of their labours.

go. You can see what each table is consuming and spending on a big monitor.

El Gallego (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 710313; Carrer del Carme 16; menú €9.40, meals €20-30; ☺ lunch Mon-Thu, lunch & dinner Fri & Sat summer, lunch Sun-Wed, lunch & dinner Thu-Sat winter) A hearty, noisily good-natured Spanish eatery opens up before you as you enter (the waiters seem like they are on speed). Stop for a quick glass of wine at the bar on your right. Seafood lovers might be tempted by the *cigalas a la plancha* (grilled crayfish, €24.90).

Cappuccino (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 719764; Carrer de Sant Miquel 53; ☺ 9am-10pm) We don't often recommend chains, and certainly not more than once. But this spot is hard to walk past. The Cappuccino crowd have converted a startling 18th-century mansion into a stylish café-restaurant.

Restaurant Garage Rex (Map pp66-7; ☎ 871 948947; Carrer de Pablo Iglesias 12; menú del día €12, meals €30-35; ☺ Mon-Sat; ☒) Back in the 1960s this was the first Mallorcan garage where you could have your car washed. Now you can wash your liver with Cava (sparkling wine) at the bar in this minimalist lounge restaurant. The cooking has creative touches but nothing too loopy. Think *rollitos de lenguado rellenos de gambas con salsa de almendras* (slices of sole rolled up and stuffed with prawns in an almond sauce) followed by a triple-choc brownie. On Friday and Saturday nights the place stays open to 2.30am for a little post-prandial cocktail lounging.

Ca'n Carlos (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 713869; Carrer de l'Aigua 5; meals €35-40; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Step into this basement restaurant for finely prepared fish, meat and rice dishes (the latter abundant and creamily delicious at €12 a head). You might opt for a fat calamari stuffed with monkfish and mushrooms (€20). Ochre-washed walls lend warmth to this split-level charmer.

La Bodeguilla (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 718274; Carrer de Sant Jaume 1-3; meals €35-45; ☺ 1-11.30pm Mon-Sat; ☒) This gourmet eatery does lightly creative interpretations of dishes from across Spain, such as *cochinillo* (suckling pig), from Segovia and *lechazo* (young lamb, baked Córdoba-style in rosemary). It also offers a tasting menu of tapas for €21 a head.

TOP END

ourpick Refectori (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 227347; Carrer de la Missió 7a; meals €70-80; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat; ☒) Lovingly prepared Mediterranean grub

with a special touch is the order of the day in the refectory of the Convent de la Missió. Alleluia! The restaurant has a modern air, with angular high-backed chairs and rigorously white, black and timber décor. You can opt for tasting menus or go *a la carta*. The *filetes de lenguado y mozzarella con crema de guisantes y mejillones a la menta* (sole filets and mozzarella with a cream of peas and mint clams) is to be savoured with due reverence. There is a set lunch for €40.

Es Puig de Sant Pere

BUDGET

Bon Lloc (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 718617; Carrer de Sant Feliu 7; menú €12.50; ☺ lunch Mon-Sat; ▼) With its mighty timber ceiling, fans and discreet lighting, this is a soothing setting for a good, healthy four-course *menú del día* that might include a *crema fría de zanahoria* (cold carrot cream soup) and *pastel de patata* (potato pie).

MIDRANGE

ourpick La Bóveda (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 714863; Carrer de la Boteria 3; meals €25; ☺ daily) You have to love this place, one of the few to transmit an essential Spanish boisterousness in this heavily touristed district. Sure, the bulk of the punters are from anywhere but Palma, but the elements are genuine enough: Andalusian wall tiles, high ceilings, fans, and people crammed in to munch on generous tapas and larger *raciones*. All the classics are here, such as *pimientos de Padrón* (green peppers, some of which are hot). The *revuelto al ajo y langostinos* is one of several great scrambled egg dishes (really!), this one with garlic and prawns.

Bruselas (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 710954; Carrer de s'Estant 4; meals €30-40; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sun) Once a Belgian-owned piano bar (hence the name), this is a carnivore's pleasure dome. Argentine meat dishes are the central theme in the stone-vaulted locale: anything from spare ribs to rib eye steak is on the menu. Wash down with a throaty Mallorcan red, such as Son Bordils Negre.

TOP END

Aramis Bellini (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 725232; Carrer de Sant Feliu 7; meals €50-60; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat Sep-Jul; ☒) Tucked away off the street, this is a carefully orchestrated gourmet hideaway, with dark-timber floors and art on the walls. It does a variety of tempting international dishes

such as *pechuga de pato con purée de limón y albaricoques* (duck breast with a lemon and apricot puree; €19). The midday *menú del día* is good value at €14.

Santa Catalina & Around

BUDGET

Sa Llimona (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 736096; Carrer de Sa Fàbrica 27a; meals €12-18; ☺ Mon-Sat) A trifle too bright and smacking of 'snack bar', this is nonetheless a good spot for an inexpensive *pa amb oli*. You can order it in various combinations, with several cold meats and cheeses, and always accompanied by salad and olives.

Afrikan (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 287007; Carrer de Dameto 17; meals €20; ☺ Mon-Sat; ▼) Get your fingers messy in this pan-African delight, with dishes extending from Ethiopia to Benin. There's a good vegetarian selection, like the Angolan beans, coconut cream and curry mix. For a whiff of the sea, try *gombo* (from Benin): prawn and shrimps mixed with okra and other vegetables.

Noah's (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 220122; Plaça del Progrès 15; meals €20; ☺ Mon-Sat; ☒) Afghan food is the speciality here, with spicy lamb (€13.20) a key dish, along with some vegetarian options. Not very Afghan options, like the salads and pasta (all around €9), broaden the options. There is a *menú del día* for €10.50.

Karme (☎ 653 829091; Carrer de Sant Magí 60; meals €20; ☺ daily) Sit at high stools for a drink and a nibble of tapas in this laid-back bar-eatery. Classics like *alitas de pollo* (chicken wings) or *revuelto* (scrambled eggs) sit alongside rather un-Spanish items such as *arroz al curry* (rice curry).

MIDRANGE

Dieciséte Grados (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 943368; Carrer de Sa Fàbrica 12; meals €20-25; ☺ daily) A pleasingly modern restaurant with a few pavement tables and lots of original tapas and small dishes. Chomp into a *brocheta de magret de pato y naranja* (skewer of duck and orange) or push the boat out with a *chuletón* (huge chop), which comes in at €34 a kg. They have some good wines, unfortunately at exorbitant prices.

La Baranda (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 454525; Carrer de Sant Magí 29; meals €30; ☺ 8pm-1am) An easy-going Italian, with exposed stone and warm-yellow hued walls and simple timber furniture and art scattered about, this is a good choice for wood-oven pizzas, pastas and homemade cake for dessert.

Umno (Map pp66-7; ☎ 871 953873; Carrer de Sant Magí 66; meals €30-40; ☺ closed 1st half Aug) Choose between Basque dishes or *pintxos* at this relaxed little restaurant. The chef, from San Sebastián, has worked in such prestige establishments as Koldo Royo (p92). Fresh vegetables and *bacalao* (dried cod) feature in his ever-changing menu. Quite unusually for Spanish eateries, you can bring your own wine.

Brunello (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 221424; Carrer de Ramon y Cajal 15; meals €40; ☺ Mon-Sat) It doesn't look like much, sitting beneath undistinguished apartments, but this is a fine choice for Italian grub, from creamy risottos (€11 to €14) to a classic Tuscan beef *tagliata* with rocket. Or how about sirloin beef in a truffle sauce?

Living (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 455628; Carrer de Cotoner 47; meals €45; ☺ Mon-Sat; ☒) From the outside it seems modest enough, but inside you'll find a little gourmet secret. How about the feather-light *risotto de mariscos con tempura de verduras y consomé de lemongrass* (seafood risotto with vegetable tempura and lemongrass consommé) to start? Various fish and meat dishes follow and they have a tasting menu for €45.

TOP END

Fàbrica 23 (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 453125; Carrer de Cotoner 42; meals €45-55; ☺ Tue-Sat; ☒) For good market-based Med cooking, this gourmand fave (long since moved from Carrer de Sa Fàbrica) is hard to beat. The menu changes regularly and generally there is only a handful of dishes each day, covering meat, fish and vegetarian tastes. There is a *menú del día* for €19 and it is usually a good idea to book ahead.

Passeig Marítim & West Palma

MIDRANGE

Baisakhi (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 736806; Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 8; meals €30; ☺ dinner Tue-Sun) Several Indian joints decorate this stretch of the waterfront, but this is one of the better ones. Settle in for a candlelit spread among the Indian antiques. As a rule there is a single tasting menu that is changed regularly, which staff talk you through.

Casa Jacinto (☎ 971 401858; Camí de la Tramvia 37; meals €30-35; ☺ Wed-Mon) A classic since the 1980s, this huge and no-nonsense eatery far from the centre of town attracts Mallorquins from far and wide for copious servings of mainland Spanish and local food, especially grilled meats.

our pick Casa Eduardo (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 721182; Travessia Pesquera (Mollet); meals €35-45; ☎ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Sun) What better place to get stuck into fish than behind the fresh fish market? This place has been serving meals since the 1940s and has come up with such things as lobster paella (€25 a head). A mixed seafood platter comes in for €30 and catch of the day is priced by the kilo. Waiters in black vests move about swiftly on the roof terrace below ceiling fans and neon lights. The restaurant sometimes closes up in winter.

Villario (☎ 871 946454; Dársena de Can Barbará s/n, Passeig Marítim; meals €40-45; ☎ dinner Tue-Sun) Here is a minimalist designer dining den of inventive, international dishes; you might find Italian cheeses mixed with chicken in a buckwheat crepe, or sautéed rabbit and prawns. Make a night of it; facing the little harbour are three late-night bars.

TOP END

Caballito de Mar (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 721074; Passeig de Sagrera 5; meals €40-50; ☎ daily Jun-Sep, Tue-Sun Oct-May; ☎) One of Palma's seafood beacons, the 'Little Seahorse' presents its critters in a contemporary key. The *gazpacho de bogavante* (a humble cold tomato soup turned into a lobster delight) is unique. After such a start you could opt for fresh fish of the day or red shrimp from Sóller. Grab a seat on the sunny terrace.

Koldo Royo (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 732435; Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 3; meals €80-110; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat; ☎) Considered one of Mallorca's great eating experiences, this Basque gastrodome offers a limited menu in its downstairs bistro, *menú del día* (€30, children €14), and the full linen treatment upstairs, where you dine at dark timber tables laid with silver service. With luck you'll get a port view. Why not start with *gambas con puré de ajo, melocotón y aceite de gambas* (shrimps with a purée of garlic, peach and shrimp oil)?

Es Portitxol, Es Molinar & Ciutat Jardí

Several eateries suggest themselves around the little port, more stretch along the west end of the waterfront road (Carrer del Vicari Joaquín Fuster) in Es Molinar and some fine seafood places grace Ciutat Jardí. Remember that where fish is sold by weight (as is usually the case in the places below) it will almost always be more expensive than you anticipate.

El Bungalow (☎ 971 262738; Carrer d'Esculls 2, Ciutat Jardí; meals €20-30; ☎ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Sun Apr-Oct, lunch Tue-Sun Nov-Mar, closed mid-Dec-mid-Jan; ☎) Sit on the broad terrace close to the water's edge at the southern end of the main beach and order the day's catch. You can see clear across the bay to central Palma. El Bungalow is renowned above all for its paella (€14 per person).

Club Marítimo (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 273479; Carrer del Vicari Joaquín Fuster 2, Es Molinar; meals €30-40; ☎ daily) For fresh fish of the day in a simple, portside atmosphere, this place is a faithful stop. Or you can indulge in tapas in the roadside courtyard. They are also known for their rice dishes. Service is uneven but the portions are generous.

S'Eixerit (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 273781; Carrer del Vicari Joaquín Fuster 73, Es Molinar; meals €35; ☎ daily) Best on a warm evening for a feast of fish or paella in the leafy garden out the back, this place is a great favourite with locals, who fill the night air with animated banter.

Ca'n Jordi (☎ 971 491909; Carrer de l'illa de Xipre 12, Ciutat Jardí; meals €50; ☎ daily; ☎) One of the stalwart seafood restaurants in Palma (a classic that needs no introduction to Palmenses), which attracts local businessfolk and seafood lovers. On your way in to this over-lit but otherwise tastefully presented eatery you will see fresh fish (sold by weight) awaiting your choice.

Casa Fernando (☎ 971 265417; Carrer de Trafalgar 27, Ciutat Jardí; meals €50; ☎ Tue-Sun, closed mid-Dec-mid-Jan; ☎) No sea views here, but countless photos of local and more distant celebs grin at you from the walls of this ordinary-looking restaurant. Basic linen graces the timber tables in this fishy, ill-lit den, providing a style counterpoint to Ca'n Jordi but virtually the same recipe – well-prepared catch of the day, sold by weight.

Es Mollet (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 247109; Carrer de la Sirena 1, Es Portitxol; meals €60-70; ☎ Mon-Sat) With its covered veranda just over the road from a little bay (Cala Portitxolet), this is a classic seafood joint, where your main course, the freshest catch of the day, is sold by weight (€45 to €60 per kg). There's a price to pay, but these people select their produce from local fishers and grill it to utter perfection.

DRINKING

Palma offers a wide variety of bars in various parts of town, but the city will never be voted Spain's party capital. For the truly raucous summer tourist scene, head for Platja de

Palma or Magaluf (p104). Most locals hit the bars on Friday and Saturday nights, although the more restless get out on a Thursday too.

Old Palma

Bar Bosch (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 721131; Plaça de Joan Carles I; ☎ 7.30am-2am Mon-Sat) The outdoor tables of this knockabout bar are a favourite meeting and stopping point for locals and visitors alike. Known for its *llagostas* (little hot bread rolls with ham or similar), it is an easy-to-find place for the first beer or two of an evening before kicking off elsewhere in the old town.

Guirgall (Map pp70-1; Carrer d'En Brossa 14; ☎ 7pm-1.30am Mon-Sat) Hidden deep in the heart of the old medieval labyrinth, this postage-stamp-sized bar has a conspiratorial feel (you may get looked over from the upstairs bar as you swing the door open). Get a beer and head downstairs for a spot at a bench.

Gibson (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 716404; Plaça del Mercat 18; ☎ 8am-3am) This chirpy cocktail bar with outside seating on the square is still busy with (mostly local) punters on a weekday night when everything else around has pulled the shutters down.

Ses Voltes (Map pp70-1; Parc de la Mar; ☎ 10am-1am) Lurking in the shadows of Palma's former sea wall, this is a pleasant terrace for summer tipping. Early some evenings they have a little live music. You can also get snacks and light meals. Sunday is Hangover Day (Domingo de Resaca), with laid-back sounds and, presumably, some hair of the dog.

Plaça Major & Around

L'Orient (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 723202; Carrer del Convent dels Caputxins 5a; ☎ 7pm-1am Sun-Thu, 7pm-2.30am Fri & Sat) This boisterous place with heavy timber benches is where locals come to travel a beery globe. On offer are countless beers from Belgium, Germany, the UK and more. Try a Cobra from India or even Cuban ambers.

Bar Flexas (Map pp70-1; Carrer de la Llotgeta 12; ☎ 1-5pm & 8pm-midnight Mon-Fri, 9pm-1am Sat) A lively locals' bar with a whiff of grunge, this is a great spot for a noisy chat far from the tourist haunts. The image of the Virgin Mary near one door is a contrast with the provocative erotic image at the back. Long mirrors reflect the drinking activity, ceiling fans blow the hot summer air around and punters drift across the tiled floor to grab a spot at the timber tables.

Pincell (Map pp70-1; Carrer de les Caputxines 13; ☎ 8pm-midnight Tue-Thu & Sun, 8pm-3am Fri & Sat) No sign re-

veals the existence of this deep vaulted cellar where locals gather for a *pomada* (Menorcan gin and lemon soft drink) at long timber tables. Young rebels with causes, such as independence from the Spanish state, often gather for animated discussion.

Ca'n Angel (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Jaume 27; ☎ 7pm-1am Sun-Thu, 7pm-3am Fri & Sat) Skip down the stairs into this smoky locals' haunt. Play pool out the back or settle at a timber booth for a premixed *pomada* (€10) and conspiratorial chat.

Es Puig de Sant Pere

Abaco (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Joan 1; cocktails €15; ☎ 8pm-1am Tue-Thu, 8pm-3am Fri & Sat) Behind a set of ancient timber doors is the bar of your wildest dreams. Inside, a Mallorcan *pati* and candlelit courtyard are crammed with elaborate floral arrangements, cascading towers of fresh fruit and bizarre artworks.

Atlantico Café (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 722882; Carrer de Sant Feliu 12; ☎ 10pm-4am Mon-Sat) Of the bars along this street, this is probably the most enticing. Think 'Hotel California' for the music, US car numberplates on the walls (along with generous swathes of graffiti) and cocktails (€6).

Bodeguita del Medio (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 717832; Carrer de Vallesca 18; ☎ 9pm-3am) For a taste of Cuba, head in here for a *mojito* (rum, lemon, mint and ice, one of Hemingway's faves) or three. The walls are covered in punters' scribbles and the music usually has a Caribbean swing.

Café La Lonja (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 722799; Carrer de Sa Llotja de Mar 2; ☎ 10am-1am Mon-Thu, 10am-3am Fri, 7pm-3am Sat) With its curved marble bar, tiled chessboard floor and smattering of tables and benches, this place is as appealing for breakfast as it is for a very generous *pomada*. Many choose to sit outside in the shadow of Sa Llotja.

The Escape Bar (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 724968; Plaça de la Drassana 13; ☎ 10am-2am) A largely international crowd (with a seafaring tilt) fills up the two rooms of this small bar in the early stages of the evening. Grab one of a couple of tables out the front for an afternoon refreshment or come along in the morning for a full English breakfast (€9.20). They also whip up some imaginative dishes at lunchtime.

Santa Catalina & Around

Once run down and dodgy, the Santa Catalina area has become a favourite spot for hitting a modest but intriguing selection of bars. Carrer

de Sant Magí and Carrer del Pou each offer a selection. It can be fairly subdued on any day except Friday or Saturday.

Soho (Map pp70-1; Avinguda d'Argentina 5; ☎ 6.30pm-2.30am Sun-Thu, 6.30pm-3am Fri & Sat) This self-proclaimed 'urban vintage bar' has a green-lit beer fridge, red walls (with some '60s décor), low white ceilings, and Bob Geldof and other '80s and '90s hit-makers. The laid-back crowd mostly seems oblivious to the traffic pounding past the footpath tables. It is one of several similar bars at this end of the avenue.

Café Lisboa (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Magí 33; ☎ 11pm-1am Sun-Wed, 11pm-4am Thu-Sat) The curved timber bar gives this place a homy appeal. When they throw in some Latin and bossa nova sounds, it gets even better. It fills up quickly on evenings that live music is staged.

Idem Café (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 280854; Carrer de Sant Magí 15a; ☎ 8pm-3am) A deep, dark-red baroque feel attracts cocktail-drinking night owls. Past the front bar and deeper inside are two separate spaces. Some of the wall art is risqué and the place has something of the air of an old-style but gay-run bordello.

T-Acuerdas? (Map pp70-1; Carrer de Sant Magí 22; ☎ 9.30pm-3am Sun-Thu, 10.30pm-4am Fri & Sat) For a noisy slice of Spain, this music bar is the place. Spanish hits (the bar's name means 'do you remember?') dominate the soundtrack at this small but fun bar that local punters cram into on the weekends.

Aretha (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 734485; Carrer del Pou 8; ☎ 7pm-2am Mon-Thu, 7pm-3am Fri & Sat) Soulful sounds mix with general pop at this pleasing little bar where drinks can be enjoyed with crepes. The main bar area (exposed stone at one end and red walls all around) leads into another, sunset-yellow cosy enclosure out back. Happy hour is at 9pm.

Miel (Map pp70-1; ☎ 646 465354; Carrer del Pou 12; ☎ 7pm-2am Mon-Thu, 7pm-3am Fri & Sat) The music and crowd are mixed and relaxed in this funky bar with low lighting and lounges.

Passeig Marítim & West Palma

A stroll along Passeig Marítim between Carrer de Monsenyor Palmer and the ferry port on a Friday and Saturday night will reveal a parade of enough bars, karaoke dens and clubs to keep you busy until dawn. There's more mischief up in the heights behind the boulevard too. Many places that are a cross between bars and clubs stay open until 4am on this strip, and sometimes later.

Varadero (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 726428; Carrer del Moll Vell s/n; ☎ 9am-2am Sun-Thu, 9am-4am Fri & Sat) This bar's splendid fore position makes it feel as though you have weighed anchor. The squawking of seagulls mixes with lounge sounds as you sip your favourite tippie and gaze east across the bay or back to the splendid cathedral from the sprawling terrace.

Hogan's (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 289664; www.pubhogans.com; Carrer de Monsenyor Palmer 2; ☎ noon-3am) It's 'Irish', it's noisy and it's full of foreign visitors and expats. But it also gets a good crew of locals. Speaking of crews, people in search of work on the boats could do worse than make this their first port of call. Bands usually play from 11pm on Wednesday and Saturday nights.

our pick **Hostal Corona** (☎ 971 731935; www.hostal-corona.com; Carrer de José Villalonga 22; ☎ 6pm-1am Tue-Sun) With its palm trees and cornucopia of plants, the generous garden of this little Modernista hotel (the house is known as Can Quetglas and was once a private villa) is the perfect setting for a drink under the stars. If you get a chill, head inside for an indoor tippie. You can sleep here too, and eat a modest meal in the 1st-floor restaurant.

Sa Posada de Bellver (☎ 971 730739; www.saposada.esmejor.com; Carrer de Bellver 7; ☎ 1pm-2am) Way uphill from Plaça Gomila, step through the greenery into what could be somebody's home. Doubling as a simple restaurant, it comes into its own when a little music is laid on (from 10pm Friday and Saturday). It's a relaxed place for a few drinks in a Mallorcan atmosphere. It can close up earlier on weeknights if business is slow.

Made in Brasil (Map pp66-7; ☎ 670 372390; Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 27; ☎ 8pm-4am Mon-Sat) The name is a little misleading, as anything South American goes, from salsa to lambada. A good place to give your body a shakedown while sipping on Caribbean tipples like *mojitos* and *caipirinhas*.

Es Portitxol, Es Molinar & Ciutat Jardí

A handful of simple bar-cafés dot the waterfront of Es Molinar and Ciutat Jardí, but neither area is a nightlife zone. The bar restaurant of the Hotel Portitxol (p88) is a nice spot for a relaxing cocktail, inside or out.

Kaskai (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 241284; www.kaskai.com; Carrer del Vicari Joaquín Fuster 71, Es Molinar; ☎ 1pm-2am) This place sells itself as something of a mixed modern cuisine experience, with Asian and

local dishes, but it works better as a chilled-out bar. The dominant black and blood-red décor and candlelit tables invite you to dally over a few drinks, which might well be accompanied by a DJ session from Thursday to Saturday.

ENTERTAINMENT

From live concerts to opera, from a good movie to a summer bullfight, from sailing regattas to a football match, there's plenty to do in Palma. You can book tickets to many events by phone or online through **Servicaixa** (☎ 902 332211; www.servicaixa.com). You can also get tickets to many events at El Corte Inglés department store (Map pp70-1).

Live Music

Most of Palma's live acts perform on the stages of intimate bars around Sa Llotja, although in recent years neighbours' complaints have shortened the opening hours or even shut down some venues. Jazz in all its many varieties is popular but, depending on the night, you may also find rock'n'roll, soul and flamenco. Concerts begin between 10pm and midnight and wrap up no later than 2am. Check www.vamos-mallorca.com (in English) for concert details.

Assaig (☎ 971 905292; www.assaig.com; Carrer del Gremi Porgadors 16, Polígono de Son Castelló) More than just a concert hall, this cultural centre in northern Palma is a place for up-and-coming artists to practise and promote their music. Free concerts are held on the café stage, while more-formal shows are put on at the larger concert hall.

GAY & LESBIAN PALMA

The bulk of gay life on the island happens in and around Palma. For useful sources of information and websites, see p198. Left your sex toys at home? Head for **Erotic Toy Stories** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 727865; Passatge Maneu 10). The biggest concentration of gay bars is on Avinguda de Joan Miró, south of Plaça de Gomila. To get your night going, you could start with the following:

- **Café Lorca** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 451930; www.cafelorca.com; Carrer de Federico García Lorca 21; ☎ 10am-3am) A key stop on the Palma gay circuit, this immaculately presented bar is great for brunch, coffee and cake, dance music and the late-night chill-out hour. It also stages regular events.
- **Dark** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 725007; www.darkpalma.com; Carrer de Ticià 22; ☎ 4.30pm-2.30am daily, 5.30pm-10.30am Sat, Sun & holidays) For all your dark room encounters, this is the place. Look for the small illuminated sign and the deep blue glow.
- **Aries Sauna Hotel Pub** (☎ 971 737899; www.ariesmallorca.com; Carrer de Porras 3; ☎ 4pm-midnight, bar 10pm-6am) Housed in the gay-friendly hotel about 100m south of Plaça de Gomila, this sauna makes no bones about its purpose.
- **Black Cat** (Avinguda de Joan Miró 75; ☎ midnight-5am) One of the most popular gay clubs in Palma, Black Cat has a dark room downstairs and often stages drag shows.

Blue Jazz Club (☎ 971 727240; Passeig de Mallorca 6; ☎ Thu 11pm-1am) Located on the 7th floor of the Hotel Saratoga, this sophisticated club offers after-dinner jazz from 11pm till 1am on Thursday nights.

Bluesville (Map pp66-7; Carrer de Ma d'es Moro 3) As dark and smoky as a blues bar should be, this intimate spot a stone's throw from the busy Carrer Apuntadors hosts free blues concerts at midnight, attracting a young hippy crowd.

Bourbon Street (Carrer de Sant Magí 79) Stop by for jazz, blues, soul and rock'n'roll: Thursday and Sunday concerts begin at 8pm; on Friday and Saturday they begin at 11pm.

Jazz Voyeur Club (☎ 971 905292 www.jazzvoyeur.com; Carrer dels Apuntadors 5) A tiny club no bigger than most people's living rooms, Voyeur hosts live jazz bands nightly, starting at 10pm. Red candles burn on the tables and a few plush chairs are scattered about, though you should get here early if you want one.

Clubs

The epicentre of Palma's clubbing scene hovers around the Passeig Marítim (Avinguda de Gabriel Roca) and the Club de Mar, where you'll find the city's largest and most popular *discotecas*. No matter what time of year, there's plenty going on, especially Thursday through Saturday nights, when locals and tourists from across the island come to groove.

Although most clubs open around midnight or earlier, don't expect to find much action until at least 2am. Things will continue going strong until 5am, when glassy-eyed clubbers

stumble outside. Some may head home, while others head to the 'afters', early-morning clubs (some around Plaça de Gomila) that keep the music going past the breakfast hour.

Admission prices range from €10 to €18, though if you're not dressed to impress you may be turned away no matter how much cash you're willing to spend.

Abraxa's (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 455908; www.abraxasmallorca.com; Passeig Marítim 42; ☎ 10pm-6am Thu-Sat Sep-Jun, nightly Jul-Aug) Formerly known as Pacha (of the famous Ibiza line), this is Palma's most established club. Hordes of dancers of every nationality descend on Abraxa's two dance floors, spilling onto the terrace and grooving to the house music spun by Europe's top DJs.

Art Deco (Map pp70-1; www.artdecodisco.com; Plaça del Vapor 20; ☎ 10pm-late) A longtime favourite, this elegant club spins everything from oldies to contemporary pop from its perch above the Passeig Marítim. Salsa classes offered Thursdays at 10.30pm.

ourpick El Garito (☎ 971 736912; www.garitocafe.com; Dársena de Can Barberà; ☎ 7pm-4.30am) A trendy club with a bohemian air, Garito is a must for music lovers. The DJs and live performers could be doing anything from fusion jazz to house, disco classics or electro beats. This is also a great place to hang out for a drink on the terrace earlier in the evening.

King Kamehameha (☎ 971 939200; www.king-kamehameha.com; Passeig Marítim 29; ☎ midnight-late) Pulsating with up-to-the-minute electronic tracks and a young, international crowd, this intimate club on the water is one of Palma's newer venues but has quickly endeared itself to night owls. It also has a relaxed terrace bar out the front for a drink without the clubbing.

Mar Salada (☎ 971 702709; www.marsalada.net; Moll de Pelaires s/n; ☎ 10pm-late) Famed as the favourite club of Spain's Prince Felipe – at least before he became a father of two – this laid-back venue in the Club de Mar draws a sophisticated crowd. The standard entry is around €12 but, to keep the pedigree, erm, royal, some punters might be charged more.

Tito's (☎ 971 730017; www.titosmallorca.com; Passeig Marítim 33; ☎ 11.30pm-6am Jun-Sep, 11.30pm-6am Thu-Sun Oct-May) A classic Palma nightspot (founded in 1923), this megaclub boasts two dance floors, five bars, stage shows and elevators down to the Badia de Palma. In summer, theme nights like 'Latex' and 'Italian Style' spice things up.

Salero (Passeig Marítim 33; ☎ 11pm-6am) Just beside Tito's, Salero is Palma's salsa club par excellence. Great Latin music, a varied though friendly crowd, and occasional salsa classes add to its appeal.

Cinema

Palma has seven cinema complexes, each with several screens. If you want to see movies in their original language, your best chance is at **Renoir** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 205408; www.cinesrenoir.com; S'Escorxador, Carrer d'Emperadriu Eugènia 6; tickets €6), which has four screens and generally runs sessions from about 4.30pm to 10.30pm.

Theatre

Auditori (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 734735; www.auditoriumpalma.es; Passeig Marítim 18; ☎ box office 10am-2pm & 4-9pm) This spacious, modern theatre is Palma's main stage for major concert performances (as well as congresses), ranging from opera to light rock. The Sala Mozart hosts part of the city's opera programme (with the Teatre Principal).

Teatre Principal (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 713346; www.teatreprincipal.com; Carrer de Riera 2; ☎ box office 10.30am-1.30pm & 5.30-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am-1.30pm Sat) Built in 1854 and restored in 2007, this is the city's prestige theatre for drama, opera and more. The renovation works re-created the theatre's heyday majesty of 1860 and combined it with the latest technology.

Teatre Municipal (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 710986, 971 739148; Passeig de Mallorca 9; ☎ box office 1 hr before show) Here you might see anything from contemporary dance to drama.

Teatre Municipal Xesc Forteza (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 710986; Plaça de Prèvere Miquel Maura 1; admission €5-15; ☎ box office 1 hr before show) Concerts, ballet and theatre take turns here.

Sport

CYCLING

The non-competitive **Volta Cicloturista a Mallorca** (www.vueltamallorca.com) cycling event starts at the Castell Bellver in late April. It is open to all who wish to race around the island by bike over three days.

FOOTBALL

Palma's top division **RCD Mallorca** (www.rcdmallorca.es) is one of the better sides battling it out in the Primera Liga. They have never finished as champions but usually wind up with a respectable spot about halfway down the ladder.

The side has played at the **Estadi Son Moix** (Camí dels Reis s/n, Polígon Industrial, Can Valero), about 3km north of central Palma, since 1999. The old Estadi Lluís Sitjar, closer to the centre of town, is due to be demolished and replaced with a new stadium. You can get tickets at the stadium or call ☎ 971 739941.

SAILING

Sailing is a big deal in Palma and numerous regattas are held in the course of the year. The **Copa del Rey** (King's Cup), held over eight days in July and August, is a high point. The king, Juan Carlos I, and his son Felipe frequently race on competing boats. **PalmaVela** (www.palmavela.com), held in April, has hundreds of yachts of all classes from around the world. **Trofeo SAR Princesa Sofía** (www.trofeo.princesasofia.org), also held in April, is one of six regattas composing the World Cup Series and attracts Olympic crews from all over the world. The **Superyacht Cup** (www.thesuperyachtcup.com), held over three days in October, is one of the major races for super yachts of anything from 25m to 90m. The **Ciutat de Palma-Regata Nova IX** is a huge event for smaller boats held over four days in December.

The **Real Club Náutico** (www.realdubnauticopalma.com), the most prestigious of Palma's yacht clubs, organises more than 20 events (some in collaboration with other clubs) during the year.

BULLFIGHTING

Bullfights take place about half a dozen times from mid-July to the end of August at the **Plaza de Toros** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 971 751639; Carrer del Arquitecte Gaspar Bennàzar 32). The fact that the season is so short is an indication that the activity is not that widely followed in Mallorca. If you are interested you can obtain tickets at the ring. The programme usually begins around 6pm.

SHOPPING

Start your credit card swiping in the chic boutiques around Passeig d'es Born. The Passeig itself is equal parts high street and highbrow, with chain stores like Massimo Dutti and Zara alongside elitist boutiques. In the maze of pedestrian streets west of the Passeig, you'll find some of Palma's most tempting (and expensive) stores.

More great shops, including the department store El Corté Inglés, are just north of the Passeig along the arcaded Avinguda de

Jaume III. Continue strolling to the grid of pedestrian-friendly streets just above Jaume III, where traditional shops and designer boutiques rub shoulders.

For family-run shops, local artisan goods and high-street brands, make your way to Carrer dels Oms, north of the Plaça Major. From here, turn down Carrer Sant Miquel, a busy pedestrian street that's like one long outdoor mall, and cross the Plaça Major to reach Via Sindicato, another popular shopping area.

The area's largest mall is the **Centro Comercial Porto Pi** (Avinguda de Gabriel Roca 54), a complex with dozens of stores, restaurants and a bowling alley at the far western end of the Passeig Marítim, some 2km from the centre.

Popular souvenirs include traditional ceramic pottery, handmade baskets, blown glass, island-made textiles, Majorica pearls, delicatessen items like *sobrassada* sausage, and local wines and liquors. Great contemporary finds are shoes by a local firm, or a work by a local artist.

FOOD & DRINK

Colmado Manresa (☎ 971 731631; Carrer de Sa Fàbrica 19) This old-timey grocer in Santa Catalina is where the locals head for typical island products like *sobrassada*, *ensaimades*, brown bread, olive oil and marmalade.

Les Illes d'Or (☎ 971 723411; Carrer del Convent de Sant Francesc 10) You'll find a decent selection of local wines, olive oils and pastries at this upscale souvenir shop.

FASHION & FURNISHINGS

Camper (☎ 971 714635; Avinguda de Jaume III 16) The best known of Mallorca's famed shoe brands, funky, eco-chic Campers are now trendy worldwide.

CRAFTY PALMA

If you're looking for Mallorcan-made glassworks, ceramics, baskets or other artisan goods, stroll around the **Passeig de la Artesania** (Crafts Walk; Plaça de l'Artesania & Carrer del Bosc), a well-marked route that includes more than a dozen shops and workshops. The museum-like **Sa Gerreria** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 213650; Carrer del Bosc 14) gives background information on the city's historic guilds and artisan traditions.

El Corte Ingles (☎ 971 770177; Avinguda de Jaume III 15) Spain's ubiquitous department store, this is a one-stop shop for everything from clothing to curtains. There's another branch on Avinguda de Alexandre Rosselló 12.

Farrutx (☎ 971 715308; Passeig d'es Born 16) This local brand's exquisite leather shoes for women are guaranteed to make you drool.

Janer (☎ 971 727674; Carrer de Can Verí 1) Minimalism is out at this opulent furniture shop, where you'll find major ticket items and handsome home accent pieces.

Món (☎ 971 724020; Plaça del Rosari 2) You can find great deals at this outlet, where flirty, feminine fashions from labels like Essentiel and Hoss hang on the racks. They're the still-desirable leftovers from the mother store, Addaia (Carrer Sant Miquel 57).

ARTISAN & LOCAL SPECIALITIES

Bordados Valldemossa (☎ 971 716306; Carrer de Sant Miquel 26) Embroidered linens, many made on the island, fill this old-timey shop.

Cerería Picornell (☎ 971 715727; Carrer del Call 7) Find modern and old-fashioned wax candles of every size and shape at this shop in Old Palma, open since 1785.

Quesada (☎ 971 715111; Passeig d'es Born 12) The typical Mallorcan two-toned patterned textiles called *roba de llengües* (striped cloths) have been sold here since 1890.

Rosario P (☎ 971 723586; Carrer de Sant Jaume 20) Artisan boutiques like this dot central Palma. Here you'll find delicate hand-painted tops, dresses and shawls, all made with light-as-breath silk.

Vidrierias Gordiola (☎ 971 711541; Carrer de la Victòria 8; ☹ closed Sat afternoon) At this old-fashioned glass shop, run by one of Mallorca's most

well-known glass-makers, you'll find everything from traditional goblets and vases to surprisingly modern works of art. Gordiola has another branch in the Passeig de la Artesania (p97) and a factory on the outskirts of Palma.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Palma's Son Sant Joan airport lies 8km east of the city and receives an impressive level of traffic. For details on how to reach Mallorca by air, turn to p206.

Boat

Palma is also the island's main port. For details on ferry services from neighbouring islands and the Spanish mainland, see p209.

Bus

All island buses depart from (or near) the **bus station** (Map pp70-1; Carrer d'Eusebi Estada). For more details see p211. Services head in all directions, and places like Valldemossa, Sóller, Pollença and Alcúdia are easily reached by regular services. Other coastal and inland centres are served by less-frequent bus lines. A handful of areas are more easily reached by train (p211).

Car & Motorcycle

The big-league car-hire agencies have representatives at the airport and along Passeig Marítim, along with several cheaper companies. Several other companies are scattered about the city centre. You can pick up a list of car-hire places in Palma and around the island from tourist offices. One of the best deals is **Hasso** (☎ 902 203012; www.hasso-rentacar.com), which offers a Ford Ka for €35 for a day or €20 a day for six days or more (including insurance and unlimited mileage). **Pepecar** (☎ 807 414243; www.pepecar.com) has several rental outlets on the island, starting with the airport (look for the Centauro counter). It rents cars like Ford Kas or larger vehicles for up to seven passengers, which can cost less than €30 a day. You can rent scooters from **Europa Moto Rent** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 287129; www.europamotorent.com; Avinguda d'Argentina 9). A Piaggio Zip (50cc) costs €35 a day, while a 500cc Gilera Nexus costs €70.

Train

Two train lines run from Plaça d'Espanya. The **Palma-Sóller railway** (opposite) is a popular

panoramic run. The other line (☎ 971 177777) is more prosaic, running northeast to Inca (€1.80) and then splitting into a branch to Sa Pobla (€2.65; 58 minutes) and another to Manacor (€3.70; 66 minutes). The Sa Pobla train makes more stops and takes 40 minutes to reach Inca, while the Manacor train takes 25 minutes. They start running at 5.50am and finish at 10pm on weekdays. Those for Sa Pobla generally leave Palma at 10 minutes before the hour and those for Manacor leave at 20 minutes after the hour. Departure times on weekends (when both lines are all-stops trains) vary but the frequency remains about the same.

GETTING AROUND

To/From the Airport

Bus 1 runs every 15 minutes from the airport to Plaça d'Espanya (on the train station side) in central Palma (€1.85, 15 minutes) and on to the entrance of the ferry terminal. It makes several stops along the way, entering the heart of the city along Avinguda de Gabriel Alomar i Villalonga, skirting around the city centre and then running back to the coast along Passeig de Mallorca and Avinguda d'Argentina. It heads along Avinguda de Gabriel Roca (aka Passeig Marítim) to reach the Estació Marítima (ferry port) before turning around. Buy tickets from the driver.

Taxis are generally abundant (when not striking) and the ride from the airport to central Palma will cost around €15 to €18.

To/From the Ferry Port

Bus 1 (the airport bus) runs every 15 minutes from the ferry port (Estació Marítima) across town (via Plaça d'Espanya) and on to the airport. A taxi from/to the centre will cost around €7 to €10.

Bus

There are 25 local bus services around Palma and its bay suburbs run by **EMT** (☎ 971 214444; www.emtpalma.es). Single-trip tickets cost €1.10, or you can buy a 10-trip card for €8.

Car & Motorcycle

Parking in the centre of town can be complicated. Some streets in the historic centre are for pedestrians only and the remaining streets are a mix. It is possible to park for free in some, but most are either no-parking zones or metered parking. The ring roads (the *avingudes*, or *avenidas*) around the centre and some adjoining areas are also given over to metered parking. These areas are marked in blue and generally you can park for up to two hours (€2.40), although time limits and prices can vary. The meters generally operate from 9am to 2pm and 4.30pm to 8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 2pm on Saturday.

THE SLOW CHUG NORTH TO SÓLLER

Since 1912 a narrow-gauge **train** (☎ 971 752051, 902 364711; www.trendesoller.com; one way/return €9/14, child 3-6yr half price, under 3yr free) has trundled along the winding 27.3km route north to Sóller. The fragile-looking timber-panelled train, which replaced a stagecoach service, departs from Plaça de l'Estació seven times a day and takes about 1¼ hours. The route passes through ever-changing countryside that becomes dramatic in the north as it crosses the Serra de Alfàbia, a stretch comprising 13 tunnels and a series of bridges and viaducts.

The trip begins through the streets of Palma but within 20 minutes you are in the countryside. At this stage the view is better to the left towards the Serra de Tramuntana. The terrain starts to rise gently and to the left the eye sweeps over olive gardens, the occasional sandy-coloured house and the mountains in the background. Half an hour out of Palma you call in at Bunyola. You could board here to do just half the trip (one way/return €4.50/9) to Sóller.

Shortly after Bunyola, as the mountains close in (at one point you can see Palma and the sea behind you), you reach the first of a series of tunnels. The so-called panoramic train (the 12.15pm service) stops at a marvellous lookout point, the Mirador Pujol de'n Banya, shortly after the Túnel Major (or main tunnel, which is almost 3km long and took three years to carve out of the rock in 1907-10). The view stretches out over the entire Sóller valley. From there, the train rattles across a viaduct before entering another tunnel that makes a slow 180 degree turn on its descent into Sóller, whose station building was carved out of an early 17th-century noble mansion. Return tickets are valid for two weeks.

MARKET WATCH

Flea markets, speciality markets and artisan markets abound in Palma. For handicrafts, head to the artisan markets on **Plaça Major** (☎ 10am-2pm Mon & Sat Mar-Jul & Sep-Dec, daily Aug-Sep) or **Plaça des Meravelles** (☎ 8pm-midnight May-Oct). A sprawling **flea market** (☎ 10am-2pm) takes over the Avingudes west of the city centre (Avinguda de Gabriel Alomar and Avinguda de Villalonga) each Saturday. The **Christmas market** (☎ 10am-8pm) takes over the Plaça Major from 16 December to 5 January.

In many of the streets beyond the ring roads, parking is free. If you are driving a hire or foreign-plated car, you may want to leave it in a car park, of which several are dotted about the city and have been marked on the Central Palma map (pp70-1).

Metro

A metro line operates from Plaça d'Espanya to the city's university (which could be handy if you wind up doing Spanish courses there). A single trip costs €0.65; return costs €1.20.

Taxi

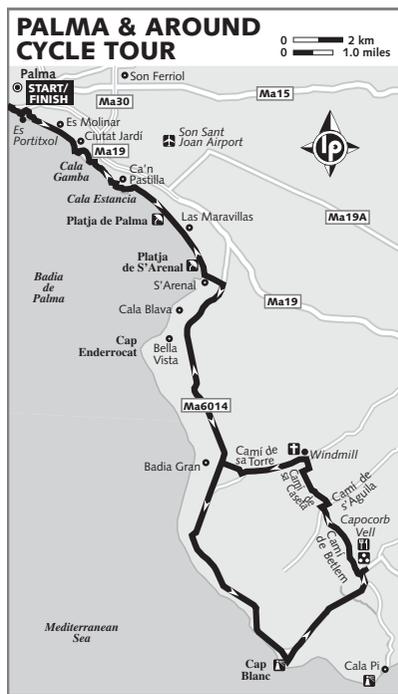
For a taxi call ☎ 971 728081, 971 755440, 971 401414, 971 743737 or 971 200900. For special taxis for the disabled, call ☎ 971 703529. Taxis are metered but for trips beyond the city fix the price in advance. A green light indicates a taxi is free to hail or you can head for one of the taxi stands in the centre of town, such as those on Passeig d'es Born. Several are indicated on the Central Palma and Palma maps (pp70-1 and pp66-7). Flagfall is €1.80; thereafter you pay €0.67 per kilometre (€0.96 from 9pm to 7am and on weekends and holidays). There's a €0.55 supplement for every piece of luggage. Other extras include €2.50 for the airport and €1.70 for the port.

Bike

Bicycle is a good way to get around the historic centre and there's a bike track along the shoreline from Porto Pi to S'Arenal. **Palma on Bike** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 971 718062; www.palmaonbike.com; Plaça de Salvador Coll 8) has everything from city bikes to get around Palma to trekking and mountain bikes. Rates start at €12 for a day to €49 for a week and include insurance and a helmet.

CYCLE TOUR: PALMA TO CAPOCORB VELL

Covering a huge swathe of the sparkling Badia de Palma, this circular ride follows an easy-going seafront cycle path, then heads slightly inland towards Cap Blanc on the island's south coast. **Capocorb Vell** (p183), the remains of a prehistoric village, makes an interesting place to stretch your legs, and a convenient lunch stop. The return journey winds through peaceful country lanes, before a deserved downhill reverses the route back to S'Arenal and the city. Most people will want to cover the 67km in a full day, but the



RIDE FACTS

Start/finish Palma/S'Arenal
Distance 67km/40km
Difficulty easy to moderate
Bike road or touring bike

route could easily be shortened by catching a bus to S'Arenal and starting the ride from there. You'll find plenty of rental outlets along S'Arenal's beachfront but if you're after a road bike try **Cidos Quintana** (☎ 971 442925; cidosquintana@yahoo.es; Carrer de San Cristòbal 32; per hr €18), just up from the main drag.

Pick up the waterfront bike path anywhere in central Palma and head southeast. Hugging the coast for most of the way, the path is a breezy sweep to Ca'n Pastilla, from where you follow the seafront road to the end of the long sandy strip of **Platja de Palma** and its extension of S'Arenal (see opposite). From here, follow the wooden signs for Cap Blanc. Although along a major road, the 23km ride cuts through pleasant enough countryside, and

motorists are used to lycra-clad two-wheelers plying the route. The road rises to 150m but none of the ascents is too gruelling.

You're unable to get to the lighthouse at the cape (and you won't see it en route either), so it's best to scoot on round the bend, rather than taking the signed road to the right. When you come to a junction (with signs right to Cala Pi), take a left for Capocorb Vell, whose entrance is just on the left.

A rustic **bar** at the ruins serves drinks, ice creams and a basic selection of *pa amb oli* with cheese, ham, tuna and anchovies (all €5).

Exit the bar to the right and take the Camí de Betlem, a quiet country lane (also signed Carrer de Betlem and marked as a cycle route). Follow this to the junction, and continue on to the Camí Estabits de s'Àguila, which rolls along surrounded by farmland. Turning a sharp right, it becomes the Camí de s'Àguila. After 200m, a left turn will bring you onto the Camí de sa Caseta, beautifully shaded by overhanging trees and lined by dry-stone walls. The end of the lane is marked by a **windmill** and, to the left, a church. Turn left here, where a wooden sign points you along the tranquil Camí de sa Torre to S'Arenal. Take a right when you hit the Ma6014 and follow the wooden signs to Platja de Palma.

From here, you can easily retrace your tracks all the way back to the capital.

THE BAY OF PALMA

The broad Badia de Palma stretches east and west away from the city centre. Some of the island's densest holiday development is to be found on both sides, but the beaches, especially to the west, are quite striking in spite of the dense cement backdrop.

EAST OF PALMA

Beyond the quiet beach of Ciutat Jardí and the Cala Gamba marina, you arrive in the mass beach-holiday area focused on Platja de Palma and S'Arenal. A couple of nearby escape hatches allow respite from the maddening crowds.

Ca'n Pastilla to S'Arenal

In the shadow of the airport, heavily built-up **Ca'n Pastilla** is where Palma's eastern package holiday coast begins. The **Platja de Ca'n Pastilla** marks the western and windier end of

the 4.5km stretch of beach known as **Platja de Palma**. You can hire windsurfing gear and take windsurfing and kite surfing lessons at **Bellini** (☎ 971 262126; www.bellinifunboats.com; Carrer del Vaixell s/n; windsurf hire/lesson per hr €20/€35), around Balneario 15 (western end of the beach) beneath Hotel El Cid. Just west of Ca'n Pastilla is the pleasant **Cala Estancia**, a placid inlet whose beach is perfect for families with tots to keep under surveillance. The waterfront, with a pedestrian walkway, is backed by low-rise developments with hotels, eateries, cafés and bars.

Just a two-minute walk further west from Cala Estancia along the waterfront is the über-laid-back, sunset chill lounge, **Puro Beach** (☎ 971 744744; www.purobeach.com; ☎ 11am-2am), an all-white bar with a tapering outdoor promontory area that is perfect for sundowners, DJ sessions and fusion food. Blend in with the monochrome décor and wear white to emphasise your designer tan. If you ever felt like having a business card that just said 'The Dude', this is where you'd most likely flash it. Turn up for 11am yoga sessions, breakfast until noon, or wait in for dinner and cocktails at night.

Platja de Palma and its eastern extension, **Platja de S'Arenal**, are backed by a phalanx of 1970s mass-built hotels and holiday apartments, bars and pubs, tacky souvenir shops and fast-food joints. The beach is beloved especially of young German package partiers. Since 2005 Platja de Palma has been the stage for the annual **Palma de Mallorca Surf Action** (www.palmademallorcasurefaction.com) event, which attracts demos, stands and leading figures in windsurfing, kite surfing, wakeboarding, light sailing, skating and more.

The **Palma Aquarium** (☎ 971 264275; www.palmaaquarium.com; Carrer de Manuela de los Herreros i Sorà 21; adult/child under 18 yr/child under 3 yr €18.50/15/free; ☎ 10am-6pm) is one very good reason for visiting Platja de Palma. Five million litres of salt water fill the 55 tanks, home to sea critters from the Mediterranean (rays, sea horses, coral and more) and far-away oceans. The central tank, through which you walk along a transparent tunnel, is patrolled by 20 sleek sharks. In total some 8000 specimens are found here.

In S'Arenal, the only 'sight', apart from the not always edifying sights on the beach, is **La Porciúncula** (☎ 971 260002; Carrer de Fra Joan Llabrés 1; admission €1.50; ☎ 9.30am-1pm & 3.30-6pm Mon-Sat), a 1968 Franciscan church with a huge

6 sq metre stained glass window a few blocks inland from the beach. You can also visit the humble original church and a modest Malorcan ethnological and coin collection.

Aqualand (☎ 971 440000; www.aqualand.es; adult/child €21/13; ☎ 10am–6pm Jul–Aug, 10am–5pm mid-May–Jun & Sep) is a typical watery amusement park, with rides, aqua gym, and kids' amusements. It's on the Ma6014 road just outside S'Arenal by the Cala Blava roundabout.

S'Arenal hosts produce and **flea markets** on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

EATING, DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE

There are several hundred hotels and apartment blocks jammed into the 5km stretch from Ca'n Pastilla to S'Arenal but there is little to recommend staying here. You can easily reach the beaches from Palma and if you're after the raucous nightlife, that too is a bus ride away (and a €15 to €20 taxi ride back).

There is no shortage of places to eat in Platja de Palma and S'Arenal, anything from German sausages to paella, although quality rarely surpasses mediocre. But who cares? What most people come for is the partying, not fine food. A predominant German crowd pours in for endless drinking and deafening music, a phenomenon known as **Ballermann** (after the name of a famous beachside drink and dance local – Balneari 6). **Ballermann** to a German is synonymous with a good, and loud, time. There are even **Ballermann** CDs.

The core of the nightlife takes place in enormous beer gardens on or near Carrer del Pare Bartomeu Salvà, known to German revellers as **Schinkenstrasse** (Ham St) and about three-quarters of the way along the beach east towards S'Arenal (orientation points are Balneario 5 and 6 on the beach). Among the biggest attractions are **Bierkönig** and **Bamboleo**, while the nearby **MegaPark** (housed in a fake Gothic abbey) on Carrer de Llät is a temple to all-night partying. Popular clubs include **Paradies** and **Riu Palace** (www.riupalace.com), in the Riu Centre building on Carrer de Llät. The clubs tend to open from 8pm to 4am. The beer gardens are open by the early afternoon and close by 2am to 3am. They are sometimes closed for breaching noise-level limits (65 decibels is the legal outside noise limit).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Bus 23 runs from Plaça d'Espanya to Ca'n Pastilla and parallel to Platja de Palma

through S'Arenal and on past La Porciúncula to Aqualand (one hour). Buses run every half-hour or so and once every two hours they go on to Cala Blava (€1.15; one hour 50 minutes). Bus 15 runs from Plaça de la Reina and passes through Plaça d'Espanya on its way to S'Arenal every eight minutes. For the aquarium, get off at Balneari 14.

WEST OF PALMA

The Badia de Palma stretches to the southwest of central Palma in a series of little bays and beaches that are the nucleus of a series of heavily built-up resort areas. The beaches themselves are mostly very pretty and clean; the tourism at its English-breakfast-and-binge-drinking worst in Magaluf. Beyond, the coast quietens considerably until rounding Cap de Cala Figuera to reach the bucket-and-spade areas of Santa Ponça and Peguera (p107).

Cala Major

Cala Major, once a jet set beach scene about 4km southwest of the city centre, is a pretty beach and the first you encounter on your way west of the city. Sandwiched in between the multistorey hotels and apartments right on the beach is a motley crew of bars, snack joints and dance joints. The main road from Palma is lined with souvenir shops, kebab stands and the like.

Inland from the waterfront is a major art stop, the **Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró** (☎ 971 701420; http://miro.palmademallorca.es; Carrer de Joan de Saridakis 29; adult/student & senior/under 17 yr €5/2.80/free; ☎ 10am–7pm Tue–Sat, 10am–3pm Sun & holidays mid-May–mid-Sep, 10am–6pm Tue–Sat, 10am–3pm Sun & holidays mid-Sep–mid-May). Top Spanish architect Rafael Moneo designed the main building in 1992, next to the studio in which Miró had thrived for decades. No doubt influenced by his Mallorquin wife, Pilar Juncosa, and the fact that his mother was from Söller, Miró moved to Palma in 1956 and remained there until his death in 1983. His friend, the architect Josep Lluís Sert, designed the studio space for him above Cala Major.

The foundation has 2500 works by the artist (including 100 paintings) along with memorabilia. A selection of his works hangs in the Sala Estrella, an angular, jagged part of Moneo's creation that is the architect's take on the artist's work. The rest of the building's exhibition space is used for temporary shows. Miró sculptures are scattered about

GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL

Nothing could be further removed from the beer gardens of Platja de Palma than residential Cala Blava, 2.5km southwest of S'Arenal. There are several rocky locations for a dip, and one sandy beach, Cala Blava (Carrer D'Ondategui). After the fork in the Ma6014 road (to Cala Blava and Cala Pi), take the first right – it's a few hundred metres down to the beach (bus stop Carrer D'Ondategui 36). Look for the Pas a Sa Platja sign and stairs opposite Carrer de Mèxic.

The continuation south of Cala Blava is Bella Vista. Part of the coast is off limits as a protected area, but you could slip down to the Calò des Cap d'Alt for a swim in crystal-clear waters. It is a narrow rocky inlet that a handful of locals visit for some quiet sea and sunbathing. Hungry? Stop at **Restaurante Panoràmica Playa** (☎ 971 740211; Passeig de les Dames 29, Bella Vista; meals €25–30; ☎ daily) and tuck into some fish on the terrace, which has magnificent views of the Badia de Palma. Walk down the steps for a dip in the 'pool' – a platform from which to launch yourself into the sea.

On the west side of the Badia de Palma, you could head south of Magaluf to a couple of pretty inlets. Cala Vinyes has placid water, and the sand stretches inland among residential buildings. The next cove, Cala de Cap Falcó, is an emerald lick of an inlet surrounded by tree-covered rocky coast. Don't wait too long, as the developers are getting closer and closer. These two gems are both within 2km to 3km of southern Magaluf. Follow signs south for Sol de Mallorca and then the signs for each of these locations. Bus 107 from Palma reaches Cala Vinyes via Magaluf.

outside. Walk past and behind Sert's studio to **Son Boter**, an 18th-century farmhouse Miró bought to increase his privacy. Inside, giant scribbles on the whitewashed walls served as plans for some of his bronze sculptures.

Maotjai (☎ 971 703043; Passeig de Joan Miró 244; meals €35–40; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon–Fri, dinner Sat & Sun), just across the road from Palau Marivent (the summer palace), is King Juan Carlos I's local Thai. A friendly if noisily located spot in cheery yellow paint and burnt-brown floor tiles, it offers reasonably authentic dishes.

Take Bus 3 or 46 from the Palma city centre (Plaça d'Espanya) for Cala Major.

Coves de Gènova

About 1km roughly north of the Fundació in the satellite settlement of Gènova, you can poke about the stalactites and stalagmites of the **Coves de Gènova** (☎ 971 402387; Carrer d'es Barranc 45; adult/child under 10 yr €8/3.50; ☎ 10am–1.30pm & 4–7pm Tue–Sun Apr–Oct, 10am–1pm & 4–6pm Tue–Sun Nov–Mar). Discovered in 1906, the caves are not as interesting as the Coves del Drac in the east of the island (p177), but are a pleasant enough distraction. You reach a maximum depth of 36m and will be shown all sorts of fanciful, backlit shapes. The temperature is always around 20°C in the caves, and water has been dripping away for many millennia to create these natural 'sculptures'.

Palma folk love to come up here for hearty eating in one of several crowded restaurants.

One of the best known is **Ca'n Pedro** (☎ 971 402479; Carrer del Rector Vives 4; meals €30; ☎ Tue–Sun), famous for its snails. It has another place at Carrer del Rector Vives 14 (closed on Wednesday).

From Palma or Cala Major, take Bus 46 to Coves de Gènova. Alight at Camí dels Reis 19, from where it's about a 300m walk.

If you have wheels, follow the signs to **Na Burguesa** off the main road from the centre of Gènova (a short way north of the Coves turn-off). About 1.5km of winding, poor road takes you past the walled-in pleasure domes of the rich to reach a rather ugly monument to the Virgin Mary, from where you have sweeping views over the city (this is about the only way to look *down* on the Castell Bel-lver) and bay.

Ses Illetes & Portals Nous

The islands (*illetes*) in question lie just off pine-backed beaches. This is altogether a much classier holiday-residential zone. The coast is high and drops quite abruptly to the turquoise coves, principally Platja de Ses Illetes and, a little less crowded, Platja de Sa Comtesa. Parking is a major hassle.

The hippest spot of the moment is **Virtual Club** (☎ 971 703235; www.virtualclub.es; Passeig d'Illetes 60; ☎ 10am–midnight), a waterside pleasure dome with thatched huts and shades, wicker chairs and wicked DJ sounds. There's also a kind of cavernous bar that fills with strange strobe

lighting at night. Glam it up for cocktails and food.

Virtually a part of Ses Illetes is **Bendinat**, named after the private castle of the same name (a neo-Gothic reworking of the 13th-century original that can only be seen from the Ma1 motorway). The area is jammed with high-class hotels and villas that are not for the financially faint-hearted. Next up is **Portals Nous**, with its super marina for the super yachts of the super rich at restaurant-lined **Puerto Portals**. The beach that stretches north of the marina is longer and broader than those mentioned above. At its northern end, sip cocktails and munch on snacks at **Chiringuito Roxy Beach** (☎ 9am-10pm daily Jun-Sep).

Local Palma Bus 3 reaches Ses Illetes from central Palma (you can pick it up on Passeig de la Rambla or Avinguda de Jaume III).

Buses 103, 104, 106 and 111 from Palma's bus station call in at Portals Nous (€1.35; 30 to 50 minutes).

Palmanova & Magaluf

About 2km southwest from Portals Nous's plastic surgery beauty and €500 notes is a whole other world. Palmanova and Magaluf have merged to form what is the epitome of the sea, sand, sangria and shagging (not necessarily in that order) holiday that has lent all of Mallorca an undeserved notoriety.

Palmanova's **tourist office** (☎ 971 682365; Passeig de la Mar; ☎ 9am-6pm) is on the waterfront, while the Magaluf **tourist office** (☎ 971 131126; Carrer de Pere Vacquer Ramis 1; ☎ 9am-6pm) is a block back from the sea. Check the local hoteliers' website (www.palmanova-magaluf.com).

The four main beaches between Palmanova and Magaluf are beautiful and immaculately maintained. The broad sweeps of fine white sand, in parts shaded by strategically planted pines and palms, are undeniably tempting and the development behind them could be considerably worse.

Three theme parks operate in the area. **Marineland** (☎ 971 675125; www.marineland.es; Costa d'En Blanes; adult/child €20.50/14.50; ☎ 9.30am-6pm mid-Mar–Nov) has dolphin shows, an aquarium, reptiles and so on. It is at the Puerto Portals

roundabout between Portals Nous and Palmanova. At the south end of Magaluf you strike **Western Water Park** (☎ 971 131203; www.westernpark.com; Carretera de Cala Figuera; adult/child €21/13; ☎ 10am-6pm Jul-Aug, 10am-5pm Jun & Sep), with wave pools, sea lions, falcon shows and Wild West-themed eateries and shops. Across the road is **Aqualand** (☎ 971 130811; www.aqualand.es; Carretera de Cala Figuera; adult/child €21/13; ☎ 10am-6pm Jul-Aug, 10am-5pm mid-May–Jun & Sep), similar to its counterpart in S'Arenal (p102).

Divers should see what's available at **Big Blue Diving** (☎ 971 681686; www.mallorcaonline.com/sport/bigblue; Carrer de Martí Ros García 6) in Magaluf.

On Saturday morning in Magaluf, a fairly standard crafts and knick-knacks market sets up around Carrer Blanc (a good four blocks from the beach) for the area's few early risers.

While restless young Germans party at the Platja de Palma beer gardens, their British equivalents are letting themselves loose on the nightspots of Magaluf. This is big stag- and hen-night territory, and few holds are barred. The drinking antics of the Brits in Magaluf have long been legendary (for all the wrong reasons) but it's undeniably a curious night out. The bulk of the action is concentrated around the north end of Carrer de Punta Ballena. Pubs and bars are piled on top of one another (much like some of their punters late in the evening) and clubs to look for at this end of the street include **Bananas**, **Boomerang** and the cult classic **BCM**.

Feel like trying your luck? Have a spin of the wheel at the **Gran Casino Mallorca** (☎ 971 130000; www.casinodemallorca.com; Sol de Mallorca; ☎ 6pm-5am). The slot machines are open from 3pm. Follow the signs for Sol de Mallorca for 2km from south Magaluf.

The most direct bus from Palma is the 105 (€2.60; 45 minutes), which runs 11 times a day. Bus 107 (seven times a day) takes five minutes longer as it stops at Marineland en route. The 106 (one hour) is the most frequent service.

The 110B (three times a day Monday to Saturday) connects Santa Ponça (p107) with Palmanova and Magaluf (€1.35; 30 minutes).

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