



MALLORCA
the calm island



A weekend escapade at this time of year can transform our soul if we provide it with the right surroundings

Since the artist Santiago Rusiñol gave this title to one of his books, many people have agreed with this description of

the island of Majorca. And where this quality is best appreciated is in the stillness of the patios of the typical houses of the island aristocracy. The narrow streets, peaceful and silent, that house these “casals” - aristocratic townhouses - in semi-darkness are the prelude to this stillness that the islands offers us. A place where time seems to have stood still.

Now is the best moment to enjoy this Balearic island that puts on all its finery with the arrival of good weather, whilst Europe is still suffering the worst of the winter. The almond groves are in bloom with pink and white flowers, the fields and mountain sides are covered with deep green and silvery, olive green leaves are starting to grow from the sturdy branches of the olive trees. The spectacle of nature in Spring is a real treat for eco-tourism lovers, but what we are proposing is a complete immersion in Palma de Mallorca. Because the “Ciutat”, (the City) as the islanders call it, is an unknown element and has little in common with the mass tourism with which it is usually associated.



The Cathedral and the Almudaina Palace standing on the seafront promenade that leads from the airport to the town centre, are only an impressive foretaste of what the city conceals....A tour of the "casals" – the aristocratic townhouses – although unfortunately not all of them are open to the public, introduces the visitor into the refined and stately Palma of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, built by the great fortunes amassed thanks to trade with Italy and piracy.

But Palma de Mallorca has adapted with the times, and the Renaissance elegance and subsequent Baroque sophistication of the "casals" paved the way to the transformation of the city that, due to the economic growth arising from tourism, has turned into one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Europe. Even in this aspect it is an unknown element to many people.

The busy nightlife of the La Lonja district – the former fish-market in medieval times – animates the historical centre, where the most modern restaurants, cafés, art galleries and the best international boutiques are to be found. Additionally, as the cultural centre of the island, it offers possibilities of novel and interesting concepts of accommodation, as a consequence of the large number of foreign entrepreneurs who have set up in business, seduced by the charm of the "Ciutat".

One of the most recently opened is Puro Oasis Urbano, an interesting boutique hotel whose owner, a young Swedish entrepreneur, had the vision of transforming an historic palace dating from the 14th-18th centuries into a place conceived for 21st century travellers seeking a casual, comfortable atmosphere. The result is a contemporary hotel, strongly inspired in the ethnic roots of Asian, African and Arabic cultures, blended with the Mediterranean spirit of the island.

Its name, Puro, means exactly that, purity of lines and spaces without pretensions in which the decoration and the architecture are aimed at enhancing the relaxation of the visitor.

The hotel's decoration is characterised by oriental magic and exoticism, whilst the illumination achieved by the lamps brought from Guinea add warmth to the atmosphere. At dusk, dozens of candles illuminate the roof-terrace on the top floor of the palace, a fantastic open area with a swimming pool, and beds and cushions scattered everywhere, that are even further invitation to let your mind wander aimlessly.

But, as man does not live on air alone, the hotel has created the Opio Bar & Restaurant, an equally trendy place where to have a drink, a snack or a full-blown meal. Constant features on the menu are fish and light meals with fresh ingredients, in which the cultural fusion is also present through the recommendations of the chef, a Swede with wide international experience whose menus range from purely Asian to Mediterranean cuisine, with a predominance of creative dishes that blend both concepts.

With the mind at peace and a full stomach, there only remains to make the most of whatever your fancy dictates. It is more than evident that there is no need to renounce the pleasures of the city in order to literally be far from the madding crowd.

For further information:
Design Hotels
Tel. +49 30 62 901 260
www.designhotels.com

CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

- **Art Galleries of Ferran Cano (Carrer del Forn de la Gloria and Pelaires)**
- **Pilar & Joan Miró Foundation (Joan de Saridakis, 29)**
- **La Caixa Foundation, situated in the lovely Gran Hotel (Plaza Weiler, 3)**
- **Apart from visiting the Cathedral or the Bellver Castle, a tour of the buildings of modernistic architecture in Palma is a must, as symbolized by the Gran Hotel, the Casas Casayas, Almacenes El Aguila...**