



The Magic of Mallorca

May 24 - June 1, 2008

Exploring an Island Paradise

A shining jewel set in a silver sea, the island of Mallorca lies in the Mediterranean off the east coast of Spain. Politically part of Spain, the local inhabitants are fiercely independent and regard themselves as Mallorquin first and Spanish second, speaking their own native dialect.

The island is at once small enough to be easily manageable, but large enough to provide a variety of landscapes and resources. From the mountains of the northwest to the fertile central plain, there is an abundance of historical and artistic treasure to occupy the discerning visitor. And of course, beautiful beaches that have made the island a haven for European tourists seeking the summer sun.



Deia, perched on a hilltop



Palma's Moorish palace

But our trip has been specifically designed to avoid the tourists! In

May the weather is wonderfully warm, spring is in full swing, and the historical sites will be blessedly free of tour buses. Our base is the 5-star Gran Hotel (www.granhotelsoller.com) in the historic town of Soller, set in the beautiful Tramuntana Mountains. It is also accessible to the capital, Palma, by a wonderful antique electric train that affords incredible views as it weaves up through the mountains and out the other side.

This year when the Almond trees are in bloom and the red poppies dot the cornfields - join us for fun in the sun on an island paradise!

The cost of this itinerary, per person, double occupancy is:

Land only (no airfare included): **\$2980**
Single supplement: **\$480**

The following services are included:

- Hotels:** 7 nights accommodation in a deluxe hotel.
All hotel taxes and service charges included.
- Coaching:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary.
- Trains:** Round trip tickets from Soller to Palma.
- Meals:** Buffet breakfast daily, 3 dinners, 1 lunch.
- Guides:** Discover Europe tour director Gavin Miller throughout.
- Expenses:** Porterage of one large suitcase per person.
- Entrances:** Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary.
- Insurance:** Complete travel insurance including cancellation coverage.

Please note: From certain departure cities it may be necessary to spend an overnight in London in order to make the connection to or from Mallorca. Please call for details.



Mallorcan village street





Saturday, May 24. Evening departure from your international gateway city.

Sunday, May 25. Arrive at Palma Airport. Your flight will be met for transfer to our hotel in Soller, set in the midst of the Tramuntana Mountains. There will be free time to unpack and explore before we gather for dinner at our hotel. **(D) Overnight: Soller**

Monday, May 26. This morning we head into the mountains to the north, where our first stop will be the Monastery of Lluc. Lluc has been a center of pilgrimage since the 13th century when an Arab shepherd boy, newly converted to Christianity, discovered a dark wooden statue of the Virgin in a cleft in the rock. The image was placed in the local church but three times it returned miraculously to its cave, whereupon the villagers built the monastery to house it. Descending, we stop in the charming village of Pollenca for lunch before heading to the north coast at Alcudia. Here we'll visit the remains of the Roman City of Pollentia, capital of the Roman colonies of the Balearic Islands. We'll return to our hotel in time to freshen up before dinner. **(B, D) Overnight: Soller**

Tuesday, May 27. Today's excursion takes us into the capital, Palma, a city of some 300,000 inhabitants. To get there we'll take a vintage electric train that first ran this route through the mountains in 1912. On arrival we'll take a walking tour of the historic center that includes the fabulous Gothic cathedral, known as "La Seu," and the Moorish Palacio de la Almudaina, with beautiful gardens featuring a Calder mobile. There will be free time for lunch and exploration before we take the train back to Soller. The evening is free. **(B) Overnight: Soller**

Wednesday, May 28. After a leisurely breakfast we'll head out to the beautiful village of Deia, nestled in the mountains south of Soller. We'll have time to climb up to the church and visit the grave of poet Robert Graves, who made the village his home for many years. We'll continue to nearby Valldemossa and the Carthusian Monastery that was home to Frederick Chopin and Georges Sand in the winter of 1838-9. After free time for lunch, we'll travel south for a view of spectacular coastal scenery; then return to Soller. The evening is free to sample a local restaurant. **(B) Overnight: Soller**



Dining out in Mallorca

Thursday, May 29. Heading to the southeast corner of the island, we begin with the charming fishing village of Portocolom, where we'll have time to stroll the waterfront or sit and have coffee in one of the harborside cafes. Lunch will be at the nearby mountaintop monastery of San Salvador – the best paella on the island. After lunch we drive back across the island and visit Petra and the Birthplace Museum of Junipero de Serra, a Franciscan friar who established a string of missions along the coast of California. Free evening. **(B, L) Overnight: Soller**

Friday, May 30. A free day in Soller. You might like to take the electric tram down the valley from the town to the Port of Soller and stroll the boutiques along the quayside, stopping for lunch at one of the many inviting restaurants serving the catch of the day. Alternatively you can hike Archduke Ludwig Salvator's spectacular mountain path towards Deia or simply relax and enjoy the hotel's facilities. **(B) Overnight: Soller**

Saturday, May 31. Our final excursion takes us by bus to the outskirts of Palma. Our first stop will be Bellver Castle, a 14th-century fortress with magnificent views over the Bay of Palma and housing the Museum of Local History. We proceed to the Pilar and Joan Miro Foundation for a visit. Joan Miro



Bellver Castle

moved to Mallorca to avoid the Nazi occupation of France (his mother was a native of the island from Soller) and shortly before his death in 1983 bequeathed his workshops and their contents to the Palma City Council. You can return to Soller this afternoon on the bus, or stay on in Palma and take the train back at your leisure. Tonight we'll gather for a special dinner at a fabulous local restaurant. **(B, D) Overnight: Soller**

Sunday, June 1. Alas, all good things must come to an end, and this morning we transfer back to Palma Airport for return flights to the U.S, via London. **(B)**



Fishing village of Portocolom