

40 hours Magaluf

The Majorcan party capital
is finally growing up, finds
Tamara Hinson

Even before the pandemic forced travel and tourism businesses to adapt, Magaluf was in the midst of a major transformation.

The freshly-painted signs reminding visitors to dress appropriately when away from the beach were just the tip of the iceberg.

Among the developments of the past few years are the beautiful Momentum Plaza, filled with independent restaurants and modelled on a traditional Spanish town square, along with guided tours, wine-tasting workshops and free activities designed to appeal during the shoulder seasons.

If your view of Magaluf is yet to be brought up to date, here's what to do, see and eat in Spain's legendary beach resort. ➤

PICTURE: Shutterstock/Pictures

ASK THE
expert

"Magaluf has definitely worked on changing its appeal in the last few years. The hotels are adding features like kids' clubs and family-friendly facilities. It's a great option for families, especially at Easter – it's cheaper than the Canary Islands but has a shorter flight time."

Laura Morris,
branch manager, Premier
Travel, Royston

NEED TO KNOW

✿ All travellers to Spain, including the Balearic Islands, must complete the Spanish government health form at spth.gob.es and comply with UK government requirements for travel to an amber-listed country.

✿ Free Covid-19 insurance is on offer for travellers until the end of December 2021, including for families travelling during half-term, from the Tourism Agency of the Balearic Islands. This covers medical expenses up to €15,000, repatriation or transport, and the cost of extending a stay.

✿ There is no curfew in Majorca and no limit on outdoor gatherings. Bars and restaurants have a limit of 50% capacity indoors.

BOOK IT

Seven nights' all-inclusive for two adults and one child at the four-star Sol Katmandu Park & Resort starts at £386 per person with [easyJet holidays](https://www.easyjet.com/en/holidays), including flights and transfers from Bristol departing October 12. [easyjet.com/en/holidays](https://www.easyjet.com/en/holidays)

FROM FAR LEFT: Platja d'Illetes; Palma Cathedral; Clarins spa at Hotel de Mar Gran Meliá; Serra de Tramuntana; Oceans Restaurant; Cala Falcó; Magaluf promenade

PICTURES: Shutterstock/vulcano, eraxx, FJ Navas, wjarek

DAY ONE

09.00: Blow away the cobwebs with a hike along Playa de Magaluf – the resort's main beach – towards Meliá Calvià Beach, a beautiful hotel at the quieter southern end. Enjoy a delicious breakfast at the property's Fibonacci cafe, an outpost of the much-loved, Palma-based Majorcan patisserie chain. Try the cafe con leche and a fresh pastry or two.

10.30: Catch some rays on Spain's most famous beach, either on the main stretch of sand or at one of the beach clubs, most of which have now reopened. Local restrictions allow for full capacity outdoors or 50% capacity indoors with distancing between different groups. One well-known option is Nikki Beach, which has a touch of Miami's Soho House with its army of champagne-toting waiting staff decked out in yacht crew-inspired uniforms, open May to September.

12.00: It takes 40 minutes to walk from the centre of Magaluf to Cala Falcó, a pretty, pint-sized beach which feels wonderfully remote – it's bordered by steep cliffs and accessed via a footpath that winds through a thick forest. When hunger strikes, head to the beach's small restaurant and order the catch of the day.

13.00: Time for a visit to another of Magaluf's most surprising attractions. The Himalayas-themed Sol Katmandu Park & Resort is Magaluf's first integrated theme park and hotel, and you'll find it just a few metres from Magaluf's centre. If you're an adrenaline junkie, head for The Asylum, a high-tech, interactive take on a haunted house – think rooms full of demented blackbirds and swarms of creepy-crawlies. Other rides include Carnival, a 4D movie experience (complete with toy guns to blast the on-screen baddies), and The House,

which is filled with interactive experiences including a mirror maze and an enchanted forest.

15.00: The beauty of basing yourself in Magaluf is that the rest of the island is so accessible. It's just a 20-minute drive from Magaluf to Palma (Majorca's largest city), which means plenty of time to check out the Gothic Catedral-Basilica de Santa María de Majorca, with its Antoni Gaudí-designed interior. And although Palma has plenty of designer boutique-lined avenues, you'll find the best gems by exploring the alleyways that wind through the city centre. Carrer de Sant Feliu is one of the most colourful – narrow and packed with galleries and craft stores, such as Estilo Sant Feliu, which specialises in Majorcan ceramics.

18.00: Spend the evening in Palma to enjoy a bite to eat in one of its tucked-away, top-notch restaurants,

or head back to Magaluf to sample its famous nightlife. Enjoy a sundowner on the sand at the Oceans Restaurant, which opened earlier this year, or opt for seafood and sea air at the stylish Barbuda Beach Bar and Grill.

DAY TWO

09.00: Time to explore beyond the beach, which in this case means Serra de Tramuntana, a breathtakingly beautiful mountain range and Unesco World Heritage Site which provides a stunning – but often overlooked – backdrop to Magaluf. Hiking and cycling trails snake through the peaks (many of which are over 1,000 metres high) but the best bits are easily accessible by car too. One of the locals' favourite spots is Galilea which, at 460 metres above sea level, is the island's highest village. Galilea's Cafe Sa Plaça De is a great place to gorge on

delicious tapas, and there's a pretty 17th-century church to check out too.

12.00: Feast on local cuisine at Tast, which is due to reopen next year in the heart of Momentum Plaza, an integral part of Magaluf's transformation. Modelled on a traditional Spanish plaza and designed as a place where both locals and tourists can gather to dine, drink and chat, it's home to several restaurants, all hand-picked by Meliá, which has invested €250 million in Magaluf's makeover. At Tast, you'll find a menu packed full of regional dishes straight from the menu of this Spanish restaurant chain's flagship in Palma, including delicacies such as *croquetas de jamón Ibérico* and, if you're feeling brave, *manitas de cerdo* (pigs' trotters).

13.00: Time for some retail therapy. The enormous Momentum Plaza project also includes a retail

area filled with a wide range of stores, so you'll find Mango and Springfield boutiques alongside Spanish brands such as Heymo for beautiful, Majorcan-made shoes. When energy levels flag, rest weary feet at either the Starbucks or RivaReno Gelato.

14.00: Enjoy Magaluf's very own version of Cirque du Soleil at Pirates Adventure, a high-octane, adrenaline-charged acrobatics show that first opened in 1985. The family-friendly shows run from April until October although a sexier, adult-only version (Pirates Adventure Reloaded) was recently introduced with performances kicking off at 10.30pm. Ticket prices start at €40 and some packages include a meal, soft drinks and more.

16.00: The often-overlooked Puig de sa Morisca Archaeological Park is less than five miles from Magaluf.

Visit the park to marvel at the remains of a Calvià village which dates back to around 800BC. Highlights include the remains of two watchtowers and breathtaking views over Santa Ponsa – the village was built atop a hill and doubled as a lookout.

19.00: Hop in a taxi or take the bus to nearby Illetes (the majority of the buses heading east from Magaluf will take you to this pretty, beachfront village). This is where you'll find the Hotel de Mar Gran Meliá, a 142-room, adult-only hotel with a stunning Clarins spa and beautiful gardens overlooking a particularly gorgeous chunk of coastline. For dinner, head to the hotel's Arrels restaurant for Mediterranean fine dining prepared by award-winning chef Marga Coll. You can opt to pair your dinner with wine – the perfect excuse to toast the marvellous makeover of nearby Magaluf. **TW**