

POSTCARD

Calvià, Majorca



Abta's Travel Convention this month showed off a different side to the Spanish party town, writes **Robin Murray**

Given Magaluf's long-standing reputation as a party hotspot, I expected to find its beach swarming with boozed-up Brits getting up to all manner of high jinks. To my surprise, and perhaps those of the other Travel Convention delegates, the reality was quite different.

While there were one or two groups of blokes wearing England shirts and kicking a ball around with beers in hand, the main demographic was families with young children splashing around in the clear blue water.

This, Calvià's deputy mayor Elisa Monserrat told me, is the result of efforts to broaden the town's appeal to a wider range of tourists. "Of course, we're not disregarding the 18-34 market, which is very important for us," she said. "Instead, it's about diversifying the portfolio and the type of traveller to make it more sustainable."

Later that night I braved the town's strip, Punta Ballena, and discovered the nightlife scene was indeed still very much alive and kicking, with exuberant youngsters piling into its numerous bars and clubs. It is clear the two disparate types of tourist can co-exist in the resort town.

The scenes from the strip could not be more different from those in the town of Calvià, a historic, sleepy settlement where many of the buildings date back to the 17th century. Here, just a 15-minute drive from Magaluf, locals enjoy lunch outside cafes in the town square and shoppers browse a small market selling clothes, gifts and an array of meats and cheeses at a leisurely pace.

Our tour guide, Tomas Valles, told us the quaint town "offers a different side to the Calvià municipality" before he led us to the impressive Sant Joan Baptista, a church worth visiting for its striking stained-glass window alone.

It's just a 10-minute drive from here to the Castell Son Claret – a stunning five-star hotel featuring a restaurant headed by Michelin-honoured chef Jordi Canto, who served us exquisite paella made using produce from the hotel's 132-hectare estate.

Calvià's tourism sector has invested millions of euros in recent years to reinvent its image. It was evident from my visit that those efforts might just be paying off. **TW**



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TOP: Calvià, with the Sant Joan Baptista church

ABOVE: The beach at Magaluf

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