

# M E N O R C A

...the green, white and blue island...



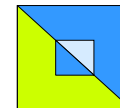
Come to Menorca, the tranquil and rather old fashioned island of the Western Mediterranean. If you are looking for peace, sun and good food, as well as beautiful beaches and hidden coves lapped by the Mediterranean, Menorca is the place for you. The British ruled here for much of the eighteenth century and today, many of the holidaying visitors are from Britain. They are drawn by the island's relaxed pace, clean white sandy beaches, blue skies and the attractive rolling countryside, patchworked with hedgerows and stone walls bordering tidy fields. Menorca, "the green, white and blue island" has only two main towns, at opposite ends of the island. Mahon, the island's present capital in the east, with its magnificent harbour, and Ciutadela in the west, the old Moorish capital.

Second largest of the Spanish Balearic Islands, Menorca has its own distinctive character - far removed from the trendy night life scenes of neighbouring islands. If hiring a car, you can comfortably explore all that Menorca has to offer. Some stunning coastline with pine covered slopes, and plenty of beautiful isolated coves with sandy beaches and clean, sparkling blue water. Away from the coast, the gently rolling hills and fertile valleys are crisscrossed with drystone walls and tiny whitewashed villages.



Ciutadela is the island's most attractive town, sitting above a pretty harbour which bristles with the masts of fishing boats and yachts. You can wander through its narrow cobbled streets with vaulted arches and take in the palaces, the Cathedral and Moorish architecture. Stop off at a pavement Cafe or Bar for a refreshing beer and tapas or sample some of Menorca's other specialities - the famous Mahon cheese, the many pastries or the delicious ice cream and sorbets.

The island's capital, Mahon overlooks the vast natural harbour, once a British naval base and which caused the British to move the capital from Ciutadela. You can still see the British influence in the narrow streets which boast elegant Georgian townhouses. The tall buildings fringing the port are converted grain stores, now housing bars, cafes, restaurants, ceramic workshops and the famous Xoriguer gin distillery (well worth a visit to see the traditional stills and to sample the gin and liqueurs made there). Mahon's other claim to fame is as the birthplace of mayonnaise (mahonesa), the dressing apparently discovered by a French military chef during the French occupation of the island.



**Villa Martinez, Cala'n Blanes, Ciutadella De Menorca**

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