

CITY BREAKS

5 Reasons That Make Palma Perfect For Your Next Girls' Getaway



Backed by hazy mountains and with the Mediterranean lapping at its feet, Mallorca's sun-bleached capital is striking to behold. And for a girls' getaway Palma fits the bill perfectly. The flights are cheap, the weather's glorious and it's super accessible, with the airport just 20 minutes drive from the action. And there's plenty to fill your time: the golden-hued historic heart is a riddle of cobbled streets, grand plaças and churches, while away from the centre a ribbon of beaches unfolds. From a vibrant food scene to a wealth of designer stores, here's why Palma should be your next girls' escape.

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SAVE TO MY FAVOURITES



Take in the stunning architecture

Palma's cathedral looms over its rooftops, its sandstone bulk a riot of honeysuckle-hued columns and buttresses that rise above the old city walls. Inside, an Antoni Gaudí-designed high altar and over sixty stained-glass windows compete for attention, while tours of the roof reward the 200-plus steps with sweeping views of the city and sailboat-speckled Mediterranean. Next door, the Royal Palace of La Almudaina dates back to the 14th century and boasts a blend of Gothic and Moorish architecture. For a final culture fix, the Bellver Castle, just a short drive away, is the only circular castle in Spain. Perched overlooking the Bay of Palma it also offers breathtaking views.

Tapas crawl through the historic centre

Palma is bursting with places to eat, from slick seafront restaurants to the bustling Mercat de l'Olivar. However, nothing beats a tapas crawl through Palma's labyrinthine streets. [La Rosa Vermuteria](#) – stacked with bottles of Vermouth and hung with legs of jamón – is a buzzing local favourite. For a slicker affair, [Tast Club](#) is the place to sample tapas and cocktails at the sparkling marble bar, which is set amidst vaulted sandstone arches. Also unmissable is [El Camino](#), an upscale tapas bar that lures well-dressed locals to its long, gleaming counter. Every seat here feels like the chef's table: watch as an array of seasonally-inspired morsels – like perfectly charred quail with aioli – are prepared to perfection in front of you.

Head to the beach

Bathed in almost year-round sunshine and fringed by the sparkling Mediterranean, a string of beaches fan out from Palma's centre. Fronting the old town, the city beach is its most accessible stretch of sand. Beyond this, a promenade links up a chain of little bays and secluded beaches and makes for a wonderful place to stroll, jog or cycle. However, one of Palma's best beaches is Playa de Palma, the area's largest beach, a long sandy sweep buzzing with cafés, bars and restaurants.



Get your shopping fix

From slick Spanish designers to offbeat independents, Palma boasts some of Europe's best shopping. At the heart of things is Avenida de Jaume III, home to the El Corte Inglés shopping centre and a cluster of chic boutiques. Amongst all the retail options, check out [Med Winds](#) for its local-ethos clothing, [Isabel Guarch](#) for striking Mallorcan-inspired jewellery, and the [Rialto Living](#) lifestyle store, which is the best bet for fantastic interiors, gifts and art.

Indulge with a luxury stay

Palma has a wealth of lovely places to stay, however one real standout is the [Hotel Sant Francesc](#), a striking boutique hotel nestled right in the heart of the historic centre. Set in a history-steeped former Mallorcan mansion that dates back to 1860, the building has been lovingly restored to retain many striking original features – vast entrance doors, grand arches, wood-beamed ceilings and an inner courtyard – all of which bear traces of the building's esteemed past. Many of these historic elements have been seamlessly blended with more modern touches: the former water well now houses the hotel's gym, the watchtower has become a stunning suite; meanwhile the stables have been transformed into an atmospheric setting for the [Quadrat Restaurant](#). Elsewhere, original frescoes and murals rub shoulders with the hotel's cutting-edge design elements and its impressive collection of contemporary art. While many of the rooms – a total of 42 gorgeous rooms and signature suites – boast balconies that look out over the old town, the best views are to be enjoyed from the roof terrace. Undoubtedly the Sant Francesc's trump card, the roof terrace boasts sweeping views over the city centre; by day the rooftop pool sparkles against a stunning backdrop of Palma, by night the bar's cocktails provide the perfect accompaniment for jaw-dropping sunset vistas. Tear yourself away from the roof terrace and there's plenty more on offer, from the luxurious urban spa to the Mallorcan-style courtyard – a lovely place to recline with some tapas and a signature cocktail. Then for a proper meal, head to the [Quadrat Restaurant](#), which effortlessly blends traditional Mediterranean cuisine with a modern twist, and offers dining in the striking former stables or outside in the lush gardens.

Rates at Sant Francesc start from €285 per night. Visit [HotelSantFrancesc.com](#)