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TRAVEL

The Best Hotels In Mallorca, From Hilltop Spa Retreats To Art-Filled Townhouses

BY ELEANOR CORDING-BOOTH

7 August 2024

Photos: Courtesy of hotels featured

SAVE

Mallorca has well and truly freed itself of its former Club 18-30 shackles to become one of the Med's most popular destinations for a stylish break in the sun. If it feels like everyone is in Mallorca when you scroll through Instagram, they probably are. Seeing someone you know at the counter in El Camino (book ahead – this writer couldn't get in) is as likely as bumping into a friend on a sunny Sunday in Hampstead.

It seems unfair that one sausage-and-chips resort town like Magaluf lumbered the largest Balearic Island with a reputation for attracting fishbowl-drinking, glowstick-twirling Brits abroad. Those in the know have been visiting the *real* Mallorca for years. Obscenely pretty towns such as Deià have long attracted bohemians and creatives who pad around making art and music in their photogenic fincas, surrounded by antiques, piles of books and vibrant bougainvillea.

The island isn't huge (it takes around an hour to drive from one side to the other) and yet it has an incredible arts scene if you know where to look. There are mountainous landscapes dotted with olive groves, perfect turquoise coves, and a frankly overwhelming number of ravishing hotels. Plus there's Palma – a city break destination in its own right and at minimum, deserving of a day trip.

TRENDING VIDEO

Inside Tom Daley's Dior Tote Bag

if you're gonna have like a onion bhaji for lunch,

Mallorca's popularity is no surprise when it has everything you could want from a holiday destination and it's only two and a half hours from the UK. If the cat was ever in the bag, it's out now and it's hollering into a tannoy. If you're turned off by the undeniably busy summer months, don't rule out the rest of the year. Unless you're visiting solely to sunbathe, you might even prefer the island in the quieter, cooler shoulder seasons, when the crowds are elsewhere and the prices have dropped.

Curator and art dealer Katharina Herold moved her by-appointment gallery space from Hamburg to a townhouse in charming Felanitx, and she describes Mallorca as "a magical island drawing in creatives from around the world". Katharina agrees that it's a year-round destination and she recommends November or even early December. Some of her insider tips include Sundays at Consell flea market for vintage and unusual homeware finds, outdoor movie nights at Hotel Corazón, S'Hortet cafe in Deià for a fresh, locally produced lunch and Arquinesia perfume shop in Palma, for Mallorcan-inspired fragrances in a beautifully curated space.

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Aesthetically-minded readers will be elated to know that Mallorca is small but mighty, with a roster of design-led hotels so strong it could only be rivalled by big hitters such as London and Paris (alas, with prices to match). You might notice that many hotels on the island follow a similar decorative concept; with swathes of linen, natural stone, oversized lamps, contemporary art and hefty reclaimed wood. Not that we'd complain about too much of a good thing. Especially when they're all so tastefully done, exuding quiet luxury without a scrap of ostentation, but when so many hotels are worthy of a coffee table book, it can be tricky to choose a favourite. In fact, it was genuinely difficult to narrow down our shortlist.

Unlike similarly expensive holiday destinations such as Marbella and Mykonos, where the heels are high and the multi-story yachts are higher, the newgen of luxury hotels in Mallorca lean towards wellness and curated guest experiences. They're more likely to offer breathwork classes and pop-up exhibitions than all-day DJs by the pool.

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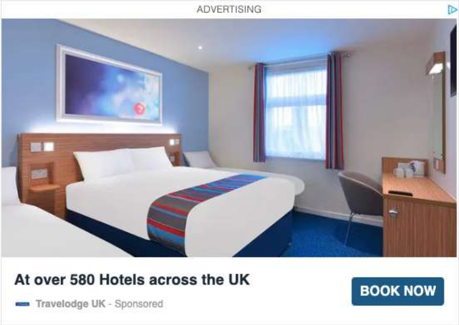
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Grand Hotel Son Net

Photo: Courtesy of Gran Hotel Son Net

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An imposing salmon-pink Palacio set in a peaceful spot at the foot of the Tramuntana mountains, Grand Hotel Son Net is the antithesis of the pared-back, contemporary retreats dotted around Mallorca. This exceptional 17th-century manor house hotel has interiors designed by Lorenzo Castillo, with clashing florals and gilded frames huddled against weighty swags of rich velvet, tasselled trims and antique furniture. Art fills the walls, vibrant textiles and tapestries take centre stage and layered, considered vignettes make it difficult to walk through a room without stopping to take a photo. There's no such thing as restraint here, so if antiques and maximalist interiors get you hot under the collar, Son Net will give you a temperature.

Though, it's not all about the superlative design inside the hotel. The palatial suites and pool cottages are set amongst lush gardens (including an organic orchard and private vineyard), with see-for-miles views and a blissfully calm atmosphere with fragrant flowers and singing birds. It makes daytime napping unavoidable. Local produce is championed here and on warm days, Mallorcan haute cuisine is served on the terrace under a striped canopy. The outdoor pool is quite special, with angular topiary privacy screens standing like green dominoes between each pair of sun loungers. Later in 2024, Son Net's long-awaited spa and wellness centre will join the throng.

Amenities: Swimming pool, spa, gym, restaurant, bar
Bonus tip: If you can wait, in late 2024, a 1000-square-metre spa with treatment rooms, an indoor pool, thermal circuit and fitness room is due to open.
Address: Castillo Son Net s/n, 07194 Puigpunyent, Mallorca

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Can Cera

Photo: Courtesy of Can Cera

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A member of the IT group of design-led Mallorca hotels, Can Cera is an impressive city-centre retreat in a grand 17th-century home. Tucked away on a side street in Palma's old town, the first space you'll see is a striking lobby-cum-restaurant with a bespoke sculpture in the central atrium. Art is the thing here and there are impressive large-scale works to be discovered throughout, several of which are by Mallorcan artists. With only 14 bedrooms but a rabbit warren of spectacular salons, lounges and soaring ceilings, Can Cera feels particularly palatial inside for a boutique hotel that – from the street – is almost hidden. Think marble stairs, gigantic doors, oversized chandeliers and curated displays of art, books and antiques in every corner – it's magnificent, to put it lightly. A dark colour palette and mood lighting all contribute to a sense of drama that no photo could capture. If you don't want to venture out, have a delicious low-key dinner on the ground floor, or find the sleek marble cocktail bar upstairs. Note that the windows aren't soundproofed, so request a room away from the street if you might be bothered by occasional jubilant passers-by.

Amenities: Spa, restaurant, bar
Bonus tip: Guests can book complimentary private access to the downstairs wellness area, with a sauna, hammam and Jacuzzi reserved exclusively for you.

Address: Carrer de Sant Francesc, 8, Centre, 07001 Palma, Illes Balears

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Finca Serena

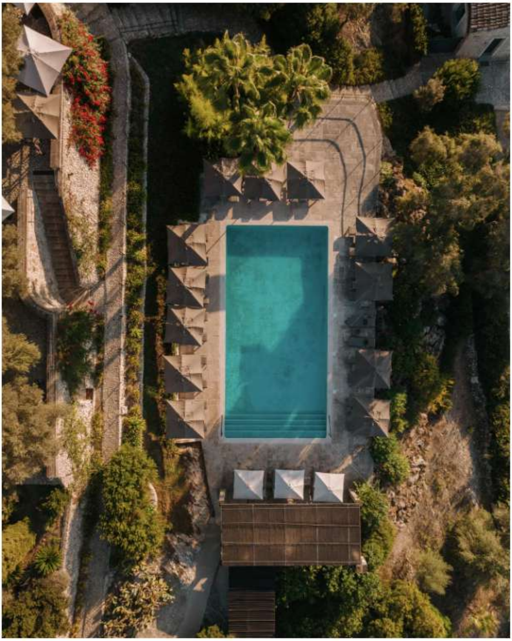

Photo: Courtesy of Finca Serena

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Finca Serena by name and by nature, this five-star member of the Small Luxury Hotels group is surrounded by olive groves and vineyards on a 40-acre estate in the middle of the island. Though, don't write it off as being out on a limb – this rural idyll is a mere half-hour drive to Palma for a dose of culture and it's around the same distance to various sandy coves. If resort life isn't for you, you'll love the peace and limited number of guests at Finca Serena. There are only 25 calmly-decorated bedrooms, cloaked in neutral tones and natural textures. The zen vibe continues in the hotel's Único Spa, which includes a sauna, hammam, fitness room and indoor pool. Activities to calm frazzled nervous systems include private yoga sessions, running routes, horse riding, cycling and strolls through the orchards. This is a place to be really, really out-of-office.

Amenities: Swimming pool, spa, gym, restaurant, adults only (minimum age 14)
Bonus tip: Pack for morning sun salutations, from Tuesday to Sunday, the hotel offers guests a free yoga class
Address: Ma-3200 km, 3, 07230 Montuïri, Mallorca

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Portella Palma

Photo: Courtesy of Portella Palma

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A new opening for 2024, Portella is a small boutique hotel in Palma's old town. Tucked away on a quiet street beside the Arab Baths, but a short walk to some of the city's best restaurants, Portella is a name to know for design aficionados and lovers of quiet luxury. Paris-based design duo Festen are behind the thoughtful, minimal interiors, and they worked in collaboration with architecture studio Gras Reynés. Portella isn't showy or bogged down with bells and whistles; there are only 14 bedrooms set around a quiet central courtyard, plus a basement hammam and fitness area, an impressive breakfast spread (served until 1pm – music to a weary traveller's ears) and a small rooftop terrace with plump seating and pretty views of the Arab Baths garden right next door.

The devil's in the detail at this perfect city hotel, with friendly staff offering pillow menus ahead of check-in, large beds with crisp sheets, monsoon shower heads the size of dustbin lids, wrought iron lighting, expertly framed artwork, plaster walls, marble sinks, brass switches, local materials wherever possible and Diptyque bathroom products. Suites and the two-bedroomed apartment also have a small kitchen with zellige tiles. Everything feels satisfyingly expensive while also retaining a monastic element of calm. On that note, there is currently some construction work next door but only between 11am-5pm, so it won't disturb your mornings or evenings.

Amenities: Hammam, breakfast, rooftop terrace
Bonus tip: Make time for a pre-dinner drink on the hotel's small but beautiful rooftop, where the only sound is birdsong
Address: C/ de la Portella, 9, Centre, 07001 Palma, Mallorca

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The Lodge

Photo: Courtesy of The Lodge

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Picture the scene: a 157-acre private nature reserve surrounded by lavender fields, mature trees and a lengthy gated driveway that only emphasises the far-from-the-madding-crowd setting. At the heart of it all is a converted farmhouse and a series of swish, angular suites. This is The Lodge, a former farm turned five-star retreat, where the verdant views are far-reaching and the expanse of green is interrupted only by peppy red sun shades around the infinity pool. Sister hotel to Finca Serena, this is another of Mallorca's ultra-luxe, ultra-relaxing hotels appealing to burnt-out city dwellers in search of peace and quiet. This adults-only spot in the scenic north of the island is less than 20 minutes drive from the delightful town of Pollença and only 35 from Palma, but you probably won't want to stray far. Highlights include locally sourced food cooked on a fire, daily yoga classes, the gleeful novelty of an outdoor gym, and contemporary interiors with plaster walls and tactile layers in a restricted colour palette.

Amenities: Swimming pool, running routes, gym, yoga, restaurant, adults only (minimum age 14)
Bonus tip: The Lodge offers guests various experiences and excursions (for a charge), so they can get to know the history, food and landscapes of the local area
Address: Vía de servicio a Pollensa Km1, Salida 37, Ma-13, Sa Pobla, 07420

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Es Racó d'Artà

Photo: Courtesy of Es Racó d'Artà

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Is Es Racó d' Artà an art gallery and exhibition space? The gold-standard blueprint for conservation and sustainability in hospitality? A wellness destination to reconnect with nature (a whopping 500 acres of it) and yourself? A luxury hotel for exacting aesthetes? It would hate to brag, but it's all of those things and it is exemplary – a real front-of-the-class leader, proving you can do good, feel good, and look good without compromising on a seamless guest experience.

Es Racó d' Artà is the brainchild of an architect and a designer, and it shows. The quiet (visually and literally) interiors are note-perfect and the pool is a minimalist paradise, designed to immerse you in its rural setting. Mallorca has more than its fair share of five-star farmhouses ensconced by olive trees and jasmine, the point of difference here is the commitment to protecting and respecting the land – this hotel is still a working farm. Don't bring sequins here, it's not a place to see and be seen. The lesser-visited setting of the hotel in the quieter northeast of the island is echoed in its humble, peaceful demeanour. Choose Es Racó d' Artà for its connection to nature, its elegant spa, and its gastronomic restaurant with (of course) locally-sourced, traceable produce. Also, its programme of considered workshops and activities, examples including basket weaving, yoga, meditation, sandal making, art therapy and guided walks.

- **Amenities:** Swimming pool, spa, restaurant
- **Bonus tip:** The spa isn't just your typical swimming pool and massage fodder, it's also certified as a medical centre, offering holistic treatments including Homeopathy, Acupuncture, Bioimmunogenetics, Osteopathy
- **Address:** Camí des Racó. Ctra. de Cala Mitjana Km1.5, Mallorca

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Can Aulí Luxury Retreat

Photo: Courtesy of Can Aulí Luxury Retreat

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Can Aulí is another entry in our list from IT Mallorca – the hotel group behind some of the most inspiring art-focused hotels on the island. Greedy, some might say, but when their hotels are so impossibly handsome and carefully considered, it would have been remiss of us not to include a veritable selection box. Pollença in the north of the island provides the setting for this 17th-century townhouse hideaway, with its pretty streets, famous Sunday market, restaurants, museums and galleries all an easy walk from Can Aulí. The location is an ideal compromise if you don't hire a car but also don't want to be isolated in a remote hotel. If you do have a set of wheels, sandy beaches are just 10 minutes away.

There are many things to love about Can Aulí, not least their commitment to celebrating the talents of Mallorcan and Spanish artists and serving local, organic produce from a farm just 1km away. Breakfasts are all about made-to-order juices, home-baked banana bread, kombucha and local meats and cheeses, you can grab dinner in the indoor-outdoor dining areas too. Unsurprisingly, the decor is also a memorable experience, with a calming colour palette and satisfyingly heavyweight architectural features offering a backdrop for contemporary sculptures, paintings and lighting installations. For a relatively small town-centre hotel, Can Aulí has carved out space for a swimming pool, terrace and wellness area with treatment rooms.

- **Amenities:** Swimming pool, restaurant, spa, adults-only (minimum age 14)
- **Bonus tip:** The hotel can arrange anything you need to make your stay feel tailored to you, from pilates classes to horse riding.
- **Address:** Carrer de Mallorca, 40, 07460 Pollença

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Can Simoneta

Photo: Courtesy of Can Simoneta

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Five-star Can Simoneta is all about the location. It teeters on a cliff in the quiet northeast corner of Palma, with sea views to knock your socks off. The hotel only has 26 bedrooms and each one is different but they're all bedecked with calming neutral tones, minimal furnishings done well and original features such as exposed stone walls, pretty timber windows or beamed ceilings, some also have private terraces facing the sea. This is an intimate spot an hour away from Palma and like many luxury boutique hotels in Mallorca, it's adults-only, so you can focus on your reading list (or scrolling TikTok – no one's judging) in peace. The building is over 140 years old and its former owner chose to build his home as close to the cliff edge as possible after advice from his doctor to take frequent sea baths for his health. It's debatable whether the medical advice would still stand today, but since the lapping waves are on your doorstep here, you could give it a go.

- **Amenities:** Swimming pools, jacuzzi, private cove, restaurant, adults only (minimum age 18), sea views
- **Bonus tip:** The hotel has a set of steps built into the cliff face, for guests to sea-swim from their private cove.
- **Address**: Finca Torre Canyamel, Carretera Arta-Canyamel, km 8, 07580 Canyamel, Mallorca

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Hotel Corazón

Photo: Courtesy of El Corazón

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One of the most exciting and talked-about hotel openings of last year, Hotel Corazón is a hotel created by artists, for artists (though, no one's checking your occupation at the door). It's a dream-like place brought to reality by Deià-based photographer Kate Bellm and artist Edgar Lopez – both first-time hoteliers who have pushed the boundaries with a hotel concept unlike anything else on the island. The pair chose a sweet spot between Deià and Sóller, surrounded by the mountains and the sea.

The 15 bedrooms each have distinctly different decorative schemes with features such as vaulted ceilings and egg-shaped windows, towering bed canopies, abstract paintings and photographs, walls the colour of peaches and sage and the occasional piece of '70s furniture or lighting. It's a visual treat and a sensory one too – with no TVs in bedrooms and soft curves replacing sharp edges. This soothing and creative hideaway is a place to reconnect with yourself, not your Netflix account. Much of the food is grown on-site and anything else is from local small suppliers. Community is front and centre here, so everything from the reception desk to the uniforms was designed collaboratively with friends of the hotel. The focus on nourishment continues with yoga classes, sound baths, reiki healing, guided hikes and a retro pool area overlooking the sea.

- **Amenities:** Swimming pool, wellness and fitness classes, restaurant, sea views
- **Bonus tip:** If you're staying in summer, look out for the hotel's open-air movie nights, screened in the garden
- **Address:** Carretera de Deià, km. 56, 7, 07100 Sóller, Mallorca

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Cap Rocat

Photo: Courtesy of Cap Rocat

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World-renowned Cap Rocat is one of the most unique places to stay in all of Spain. This secluded seafront fortress is a listed National Monument, built to survey the Bay of Palma. Now an exclusive five-star hotel in a protected natural area of bird, marine and plantlife, it appeals to honeymooners and people ticking off bucket-list stays (the once-in-a-lifetime element is reflected in the price). Painstakingly transformed by Antonio Obrador to enhance and retain its original character and history, the hotel won a Europa Nostra award for the preservation of its cultural heritage. Cap Rocat is a true oasis of calm for its lucky guests, with spectacular sea views, thick stone walls and several of the highest–end suites offering private pools and terraces. In this biodiverse area, the best way to spend a day is to meander around the fortified buildings – they're really quite something – and take a dip in the infinity pool, enjoying the heaven-on-earth setting. If you happen to catch the hotel in bad weather, head to the impressive below-ground spa (of course it's impressive, everything here is).

- **Amenities:** Swimming pool, restaurant, bar, spa, adults only (minimum age 15)
- **Bonus tip:** The hotel can loan anything you need to make the most of the nature-focused setting – snorkelling gear, bicycles, binoculars, they can also organise excursions and yoga by the pool
- **Address:** Ctra. d'enderrocat, s/n 07609 Cala Blava, Mallorca

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Hotel Valldemossa

Photo: Courtesy of Hotel Valldemossa

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It's hard to imagine a more astoundingly scenic or relaxing setting than this. Valldemossa is a historic, picturebook-pretty hilltop town known for its links to Chopin, it's the type of place where you'll waft around in head-to-toe linen, taking photos of every bougainvillea-draped doorway and dramatic vista. If it sounds too romantic to be true, you better believe it. A perfect town deserves a perfect hotel and luckily, it found one in the confidently-named Valldemossa, which opened in March 2024 but is already running at almost full capacity – a testament to its reputation.

Valldemossa is another member of the IT Mallorca group, so the design is pleasingly unexpected, with eclectic, retro-leaning interiors revolving around the hotel's collection of contemporary art. Windows, terraces and seating are all placed to frame *those* views. And what a view it has – an elevated spot five minutes from the centre of town, with a 360-degree panorama of the valley and mountains. If spectacular scenery isn't your thing, there's also a superb restaurant, high-tech spa treatments, plus a large Jacuzzi and sauna that guests can reserve for their exclusive use (with no charge). With only 12 bedrooms, the pool area was always destined to be relaxing but the constant sound of birdsong guarantees it.

- **Amenities:** Restaurant, bar, outdoor gym, spa, swimming pool, adults-only (minimum age 14)
- **Bonus tip:** The hotel's restaurant – De Tokio A Lima – shouldn't be missed for heavenly Mediterranean/Japanese fusion fine dining with a jaw-dropping view of the valley around Valldemossa. Prepare to fill a

camera roll.

- **Address:** Plaça de Sant Francesc, 5, Centre, 07001 Palma, Mallorca

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Sant Francesc Hotel Singular

Photo: Courtesy of Sant Francesc Hotel Singular

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With a top-notch location in the old town, steps from Sant Francesc Basilica, Sant Francesc Hotel Singular is a hot ticket for design-lovers visiting Palma and the hotel is often fully booked. Consistently on the receiving end of rave reviews from guests, this five-star neoclassical mansion is a sophisticated spot for city breakers who want to spend time at their hotel, rather than treat it as a place to crash. The 42 bedrooms are the last word in restrained elegance, with significant artworks and design classics set against a neutral backdrop of black, off-white and grey. There's no bad room choice in the building but most are modern, so if you're looking for history and wow factor, book the Sant Francesc Suite, with its restored 19th-century ceiling fresco and double Juliet balconies. There's also a lobby bar, an indoor-outdoor restaurant and the jewel in the crown – a pool and loungers on the roof.

- **Amenities:** Restaurant, bar, rooftop, swimming pool, fitness room, spa treatments
- **Bonus tip:** Pack a cossie. Few luxury hotels in the centre of Palma have a swimming pool but this is one of them and it's on the rooftop, with a cocktail bar just steps away.
- **Address:** Plaça de Sant Francesc, 5, Centre, 07001 Palma, Mallorca

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La Residencia, A Belmond Hotel

Photo: Courtesy of La Resedencia

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La Residencia isn't the newest five-star hotel on the island but this elegant grand dame with its fairytale setting is arguably the most iconic. A member of the esteemed Belmond group of luxury hotels and trains, La Residencia's pioneering approach to characterful luxury – with individually designed rooms, significant artworks and antiques – set the bar high. Even now, 40 years after it was opened by former owner Richard Branson and with a startling amount of stiff competition (Mallorca is spilling over with exceptional hotels), the hilltop retreat still holds its own. With a location in the mountainous, creative enclave of Deià – one of the most exclusive postcodes on the island – the hotel surveys the surrounding landscape, with jaw-dropping views from every angle. This is a true destination hotel that you likely won't want to leave at any point, because why would you? There are multiple dining and drinking options, a dedicated spa and wellness area, stylish rooms and suites (including local resident Matthew Williamson's one-off design) and a nod to Deià's artistic past with painting and pottery classes, plus art exhibitions.

- **Amenities:** Swimming pool, restaurant, bar, spa, gym, tennis courts, creative classes
- **Bonus tip:** At the hotel's Restaurante Miró, live music every evening makes this magical spot feel even more outrageously romantic than it looks in photos

- **Address:** Carrer son Canals, 07179 Deià, Mallorca

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Can Ferrereta

Photo: Courtesy of Can Ferrereta

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Five-star Can Ferrereta is a hotel you feel you could have manifested in your dreams, with 32 wildly attractive rooms dotted around a compact estate that started out (like so many hotels in Mallorca) as a 17th-century house. Transformed with exquisite attention to detail and no expense spared by the Soldevila-Ferrer family, Can Ferrereta is the archetypal rustic-luxe retreat, with piles of coffee table books, exposed beams, deep linen sofas and design classics by Scandinavian and Italian furniture and lighting brands, plus covetable artworks that would cause quite a stir should one go missing.

One attribute that makes this hotel different to its rural competition is the location – rather than being surrounded by miles of fields and little else, its town-centre setting puts it within easy walking distance of the cafes, boutiques and twice-weekly food markets in peach-hued Santanyi. If you hire a car, the nearest beaches are a short 10-minute hop away and you're in the best corner of the island here for one dreamy pine-fringed cove after another, without the annoyance of rowdy beach clubs. For water babies who'd prefer the sanctuary of the hotel, there's a humdinger of a pool area flanked by thickly cushioned loungers and olive trees, where the sound of crashing waves is replaced by twittering of birds. There's another beautiful pool indoors in the spa, should you stay on a rainy day.

- **Amenities:** Swimming pool, restaurant, bar, spa, adults-only (minimum age 14)
- **Bonus tip:** Can Ferrereta is sister hotel to Sant Francesc in Palma, so if you love one, you'll love the other. They would make the ideal pairing for a beach and city combination.
- **Address:** Carrer de Can Ferrereta, 12, 07650 Santanyí, Mallorca

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