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\$5.95 westofthecity.com
JANUARY | FEBRUARY 2020



Mallorca

SPANISH LUXURY

by Shannon Mastaler

One of Europe's hidden gems, the island of Mallorca sits proudly in the Mediterranean Sea. Part of Spain's Balearic Islands, its coastlines offer jaw-dropping views of mountains, Roman and Moorish remains, beaches, caves, old small towns and historic cityscapes. While you've heard of Santorini, and Capri, Mallorca is just a little more inconspicuous... already a favourite luxe travel destination of the British and Russians, it's a diamond just being discovered by North Americans.

The unusual and striking beauty of Mallorca is found in the juxtaposition of almost everything. Palm trees are set among ancient European streets, stunning historic buildings house luxurious hotels and Michelin Star restaurants and Spanish estates reside among farms where the sounds of chickens fill the air. It's the very best of European charm, gastronomy, wine and architecture with the luxury comforts that travellers from around the world demand.

To explore all that Mallorca offers, I embarked on a Mallorca hotel tour to spread my stay across three unique five-star hotels claiming to offer extreme luxury stays and amenities.

The first stop is Finca Serena. Only 20 minutes from the airport, this hotel is everything you've ever dreamed a country estate in Europe would be. Set on a hill, the old stone estate dating back to the 13th century overlooks miles of farms, villages and mountains. With cobblestone everything, palm trees, and million-dollar views, Finca is the ultimate in European luxury retreats.

Finca has perfected the art of luxurious simplicity. Surrounded by acres of vines, olive trees and lavender it's a treat for the senses – especially taste. The food is crafted by the talented Chef Celia Martin-Nieto with a menu that changes daily based on availability of the freshest and best ingredients. With its own gardens and fruit trees to provide a wide selection of natural produce, the result is a modern take on traditional roots utilizing the latest techniques to create one of my best dining experiences in Mallorca. Over the course of three days, my partner and I are treated to char grilled crayfish and gnocchi, marinated vegetables with red tuna belly, slow cooked lamb shoulder, scallops with almond cold soup, beef filet mignon with saffron, cheese

boards, gourmet coffee, fresh made croissants and breads, homemade jams and more. A true treat for the palette.

The main estate houses the dining room, kitchen, reception, a few guest suites and the main gathering space. The décor of the gathering space reflects a philosophy of luxurious simplicity comprising of white and cream linens, natural wood, an extra-large fireplace, chess board, textured rugs and pillows inviting you to get cozy. Its natural elements, matte black, combined with refined materials are blended to create a rustic European feel. This gathering space is where my partner and I later spend a rainy morning playing chess and drinking freshly brewed herbal tea. The rain pours down outside of the estate, while ambient music plays. It's magical.

Finca Serena includes a gym and spa where we enjoy the indoor pool, sauna and steam rooms. The spa overlooks stunning views. With the entire wall open to the outdoor patio, I sit in the warm pool reading my book, lulled by the sounds of the chickens clucking and the rain falling.

Outside of the main estate is a large patio overlooking mountains, where firepits burn at night and breakfast is served in the mornings. With a pool surrounded by comfy loungers, cabanas and food and beverage service, it's the perfect place for a sunny afternoon. To further enhance the mission to relax and be calm, Finca offers yoga, meditation, and other classes each morning – all in an effort to treat each guest to the ultimate in relaxation.

Surrounding the main estate, are original stone buildings converted into private suites. Many with stunning views and private terraces. Our suite offers a state-of-the-art shower, gourmet coffee and tea, luxury bedding and sheets, a large living room and a beautiful patio overlooking the cobblestone grounds, made private by a curtain of lime trees.

Finca is the kind of place that inspires you to find the very best part of yourself. My stay accomplishes this. I feel refreshed and renewed.

From Finca we make our way to the island's capital, Palma. Hotel El Llorrenc is a new chic, luxury hotel where the décor is a visual experience – urban sophistication that mixes beautiful wood, gold accents, marble and bright pops of colour. Its signature Arabic star is ubiquitous throughout, imprinted in wood doors, tiles, floors, towels and more.

Set seaside with views of the coast, city streets and ships, and only steps from the Palma Cathedral, this location allows guests to experience the finest Mallorca has to offer. Our room epitomizes comfort, offering various options for lighting, mood and more. With its rich wood details, signature Arabic pattern, contemporary furniture and metallic accents, the room is a work of art.

This gem of a hotel offers a jaw dropping experience on its rooftop that features an infinity pool overlooking the sea and much of the city. With eclectic design choices paired with modern luxury, the rooftop offers an unparalleled view to enjoy leisure and relaxation. There is a cocktail bar along with comfortable sun loungers and Balinese beds →



Terrace at Finca Serena

to take shelter from the sun. It's without a doubt a game changer for hotels in Palma.

The wellness studio at El Llorenç is described by the hotel as a modern version of Arab baths. It's an oasis of tranquility. Its restaurant, The Tannur, takes its name from an Arabic term referring to the clay oven that was discovered during the hotel's excavation (a must-see when you visit).

In the evenings we venture out by foot to explore the city. Must stops are the cathedral and the Royal Palace of La Almudaina. You can also explore caves, take the tram through town and into the country and enjoy the beach. Palma offers luxury shopping and world class cuisine; it's home to several Michelin Star restaurants. The harbour area offers a selection of eateries overlooking grand yachts. It's a city I fell in love with.

My dinner at Fera Restaurant and Bar was a gastronomy experience. Executive Chef, Simon Petutschnig offers Mediterranean-Asian flavours with its refined tasting menus and a hand-picked selection of 60 wines. With eight courses and an attentive server to explain each dish, alongside a sommelier to pair each course perfectly, our experience at Fera is a sensory feast for the palate and the eyes. Our menu included simmental steak tartar, bluefin tuna, foie gras, chicken and truffle cannelloni and sea bass. Fera is a treat for any foodie.

Our third and final stay in Mallorca is at Hotel de Glòria de Sant Jaume located in the centre of one of the best areas of old city Palma. It is a restored, elegant masterpiece that conserves some of its medieval construction from the 16th century. With elegant décor throughout, and a feel of pampered luxury, each of the 14 guest suites are uniquely designed for guests to feel like they're staying in a grand Mallorcan home.

A most intriguing feature is the hotel's underground wellness spa. Located in the basement of the hotel, the spa boasts a large pool, which enters the original water reservoir, with vaulted ceiling, sauna, steam bath, a relaxation area and hydromassage.

The rooftop of the estate is an outdoor space to enjoy the tranquility of the old town for a few hours under the sun, view of the Palma skyline and relax in the large Jacuzzi. The perfect place for cocktails and lunch. We treat ourselves to a full day traipsing between the roof and the underground spa to fully appreciate the luxurious and elegant vibe of the hotel. →



Stunning rooftop at Hotel El Llorenç.



A villa at Finca Serena



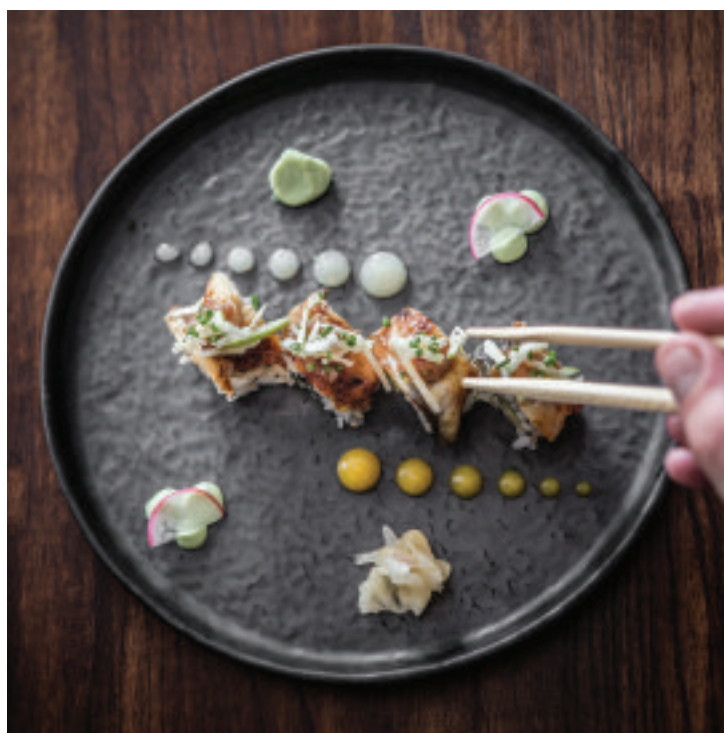
Hotel El Llorenç



Hotel de Glòria de Sant Jaume



The restaurant in Hotel de Glòria de Sant Jaume



Fera Restaurant and Bar offers a gastronomy experience.

Our room offers a luxurious soaker tub with floor to ceiling windows that opens to a small balcony overlooking old narrow streets. A bath here is a real treat when combined with the sounds of the horses trotting on the cobblestone below, a gentle breeze blowing and a glass of Cava, Spain's sparkling wine, in hand.

Dinner at the hotel restaurant El Patio De Gloria is one of the best meals in our Mallorcan adventure. Hidden away inside the beautiful hotel, the restaurant is a gem just waiting to be discovered. We enjoy a delectable meal of foie gras and steak tartar, Pekin style veal ribs, onglet and Mallorcan burrata. Our bellies satisfied, we contentedly head to our room with night caps to prepare for our departure the next day.

As our car arrives the next morning, we say goodbye to Hotel de Glòria de Sant Jaume and to Mallorca. We are sad to go, vowing to return to this little piece of Spanish luxury. With so much to offer travellers looking for a special European vacation, it's no wonder Mallorca is becoming one of Europe's hottest destinations. Until next time, Mallorca! 🍷

