



Spain: Majorca and Barcelona Trip Notes March 24 – April 5, 2014

Why Palma de Majorca?

It is not easy to get here but I was incentivized by this being the inaugural marathon of Kathrine Switzer honoring her Boston Bib number 261. Over the years she has learned that her story as outlined in the book "Marathon Woman" has made women feel more empowered, and especially those women who took heed and took up running too. So here she is with the woman's only marathon. And here I am supporting the event though I had never agreed with women's only anything. You might remember that I grew up in the era when they were too many men's only events. Is this reverse discrimination? Kathrine found that some women were more comfortable in women's only races and she found that when she created the Avon Running Series which toured the world and brought out women in droves when everyone else said it couldn't be done.

http://m.runnersworld.com/womens-running/kathrine-switzer-launches-race-series?cm_mmc=Facebook-RunnersWorld-Content-RunnerStories-SwitzerSeries

See more about KV Switzer's event at the end of the file.

Hairy transport.

Traveling with Tom pretty much requires going First Class. That air ticket was pretty wild in price until I found a ticket using miles. Such ticket however required a circuitous route. So we left Newark one evening and didn't arrive to Majorca until the next evening, having gone through Munich and Zürich. The lounges and layovers were made much more delightful by having Lufthansa lounges which are truly first class. So we ate and drank our way there. I counted up the number of drinks that I had and it sounded like absolute alcohol poisoning even halfway through. I don't think we should talk about Tom's consumption. I didn't wonder why he didn't feel well when we arrived. On the way home I counted up seven meals in one day between the lounges and the airplanes.



Lufthansa business first? - NOT! I'm mostly unimpressed. From their lounge club to gate is easily a 15 minute fast hike. Then take a bus to the plane way out on the tarmac. Why such a lovely terminal and gates aren't used I don't know except that it saves gate fees. We're taken to outside uncovered stairs, followed by exact same seats as economy only with the middle seat left empty and sometimes a table placed on that middle seat. There is more leg room in United's economy plus. Fortunately flights over the ocean offer better seating but not always true lie-flat seats.

No Jet lag allowed?

We don't allow jet lag. You land and that's the time it is. So we were able to convince our bodies the first day when we traveled onward and walked the streets to enjoy the night life and didn't even mind the rain. But the next day was a different story and by late afternoon we had collapsed for a couple of hours nap before heading out again.

Overview of the city.

Majorca is on the eastern edge of Spain in the Mediterranean Sea. It's the largest island of the Balearic island archipelago, with its capital in Palma where we had a lovely hotel in the Old City of Palma. Majorca goes back to the Byzantine era in the 500s and the Aragon era of the 1200s. Chopin, George Sand, Agatha Christie, Jean Miro all called it their home, and still it's populated with the likes of Michael Douglas, Boris Becker and Claudia Schiffer. If I saw them I didn't notice but I did notice that there are generally pretty people. I didn't miss the Fatso Americans.

The hotel booked us a private walking tour. It was arranged for three hours but we got a full four hours from the young gal, who was an official tourist guide, well educated, born in the city and with relatives who were architects. She gave us a good overview and then marked a map of places to go on our own.

Another day we had a different view, that being from a bus top. This took us to the outskirts of the city, through residential areas, and quite a different view of the port. It is clear that the population is pretty mixed. We never saw any slums and almost no street people. This being home to movie stars and rich folks was made clear by some of the huge villas with sea views and infinity pools hanging over the hillside.



Accommodations.

The marathon tourist site was not all that helpful. Fortunately Tom was. Right in the heart of the old city in a restored 18th century villa was the Can Cera hotel with only 12 rooms and each of them individual with antiques and yet modernized. It mostly earns its five-star status and yet it had little quirks that made me say that I believed it was designed by a young boy who had never stayed in a hotel. The service was impeccable and unique and the breakfast was generous and luxurious. The courtyard was picture-perfect. The common rooms abounded from the library to the gold room to the blue room to the large rooftop area and the magnificent open courtyard where we've had coffee and drinks and which the breakfast room overlooked.

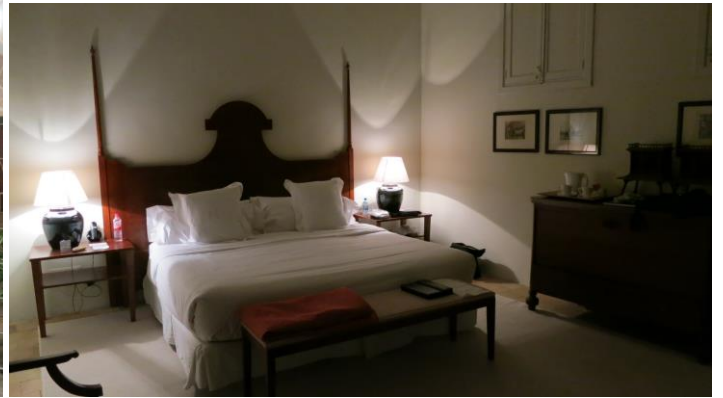
Yet, why would you put a window in the door of the bathroom. It was helpful that it was on another level. Why would you not have a desk. Maybe they're telling us we shouldn't be working. Why would the electricity outlets be in areas where there was no desk or table. The lighting in the bathroom was lovely but a bit useless. The big walk-in shower with pricey frameless glass doors had no lighting and the towel racks, though heated, were across the room. The long white marble trough sink looked attractive but I could have used part of that triple size sink as countertop.

Overall it still rates a five star in my view. It is in the middle of everything and it is within a couple blocks from the start the marathon and the main tourist attractions.

From the hotel website: *Located in the heart of Palma de Majorca's Old Quarter, Hotel Can Cera occupies one of Old City's most attractive spots. Can Cera offers 12 Suites as well as a restaurant, spa and warmly welcoming common areas. The hotel provides all comforts and amenities you expect from a luxury establishment. At over 700 years old, Can Cera has one of the longest histories in Palma. The building dates back to before 1232 when Jaume I conquered the island with Catalan and Aragonese troops.*

Located inside the ancient city walls close to the Cathedral, Can Cera is in the very heart of the Old City, between the Plaza de Santa Eulalia and the Plaza de San Francisco. Over the years, Can Cera's many owners have made alterations to the original building. The most important of these were done in the 17th Century, when –as in many of the surrounding houses– Italian Renaissance architects inspired the creation of the celebrated patios, giving the houses their singularly

attractive, yet austere, character. Inside, the house is significant and rich with well-proportioned rooms, high ceilings of sculptured plasterwork, balconies and above all, palatial adornments.



Eats.

Tom kept looking for Vichyssoise (potato soup). He once got a lovely mushroom soup with truffles and another time he got a bouillabaisse with skewered langoustine. Each time he was happy with what he got yet he's still looked for vichyssoise. The amusing thing was that on our first day he saw Vichyssoise on a blackboard special and every evening he looked for it again, and only on our last day did he realize it was the lunch special for what turned out to be our favorite dinner restaurant.

Three nights we went to tapas restaurants with the first night being just because it was close by when the monsoons started. One was simple and cheap and the other was expensive and elegant but both were good and the price of the first was half that of the second. That's fair. I feel very blessed that we can eat and do whatever we want and that's a good thing whenever you are in the European areas because the euro exchange rate is not very helpful to the dollar. (One amusing example I just thought of is that our walking tour cost more than my first car purchase. That tells you two more things: that the walking tour was expensive and that my first car cost a pittance.)



Weather and more weather.

Majorca in the spring puts new meaning to the phrase "If you don't like the weather, just wait and it will change." It was considerably colder than had been expected and by that I mean it was 50 instead of mid 60s. The 10% chance of rain seemed to be more like 80%. It would be warm and we would be unzipping our jackets. It would be cold and we would be layering up with everything we owned. The wind blew like mad and then came the calm.

Majorca? Or Mallorca?

I see both used and I started with the J spelling and it just looks prettier so I've stuck with it. I've no idea which it is supposed to be. I didn't even know where it was or that it was an island and I had to look in the world Atlas to figure out where I was visiting. If you don't know, it is an island on the eastern side of Spain, owned by Spain, and it is reasonably close to Barcelona and also Catalan. In the 60s the colorful like Gina Lollabrigida came here. Now Michael Douglas and his wife, if she is still his wife, live here part of the year. When I mentioned Majorca, people say oh yeah that's where so and so the famous tennis stars live. Little did I know. Carlos Moya? Rafael Nadal?

But the mundane live here too. I just saw a classy woman walking down this really classy street with a giant package of toilet paper. So life goes on and is normal no matter your status. And if there is anything I've learned in my travels and living in other countries, it is that the world is flat. Basics are basics. We all need toilet paper no matter the villas elegance or the stars importance. So there!

I found an article called *You call it Mallorca, I call it Majorca* which suggested that the J came about because the Brits couldn't make the double-L sound. According to many websites, both are correct. The old timers like Majorca. Wikipedia uses both. More history, famous residents, etc. here: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Majorca>

Unique Garbage Collection - Too bad it didn't work. They tried to hide it all with pneumatic underground system. Oh well. <http://www.palmaproperty.com/> It was in fact a very clean and neat city.

Notes on leaving Palma de Majorca

I came for the marathon but reverted to the 10K and then even reverted to stopping after about 40 minutes. It rained, I was pretty wet, I was cold, I knew Tom was having a big glorious buffet breakfast, I knew that I was having to pack wet clothes and shoes to depart in a few hours to Barcelona, so why not just turn back? Besides, my fingers were so cold that the iPhone for a camera wouldn't open.

I wanted to be counted or I wouldn't have even started in the rain. I wanted to support Kathrine Switzer and her Inaugural Marathon (261 Women's) and thus my being there was important. But finishing was not and when I saw her at the finish line (where I did NOT cross the finish line, she laughed when I said "Finish? Who cares?" I was there to see the 10K winner cross. I missed the Majorca pearl necklace they offer in lieu of a medal. But again, at this age and with a full house of collections, who cares?

Pros and cons of the event

- The destination is wonderful though it is not particularly easy to get to the island off the eastern coast of Spain. It is also downright pricey for air fare though Kathrine advises that going through London then hopping on an El Cheapo plane is a good and much easier method.



- The start and finish of both the marathon and the 10K is right in front of the cathedral in old town historical center. Huge cathedral – highest in Europe. It runs all along the water's edge.
- The tourist agency in charge doesn't think like an American and I never could figure out their website or their logic in their offerings when I emailed them. I did hugely better with my own tours and hotel as well as taxi from the airport instead of their pricey suggestions. I believe that Kathrine has them sorted out for the next year.
- The expo was sufficient but odd in that it was in “the attic” floor (their words) of a department store. One needed to pay attention which department store as the same name had a few locations. As it turns out, their “attic” gave lots of room, a place for shopping, conversing, a free manicure, and easy bag and bib retrieval. For women, this would be much better than being in the usual gym or convention center.
- A T-shirt and reusable canvas goodie bag with various samples inside were more than generous. Even a color picture book of Majorca. The T-shirt logo was commendable in design and quality as it honored Kathrine Switzer and her Boston bib number 261. Women empowered. Free manicures were available at the expo.
- Hotels are available near to the start and finish. I don't know why the tour agency did not offer them. Tom found a hotel in old town, decent priced, luxurious, in a 17th century converted palace, and within 5-10 minutes of the start. Thus I was able to walk to the start just moments before and avoid some of the rain. (The host hotel had no charm and was a 30 minute walk from all the good stuff.)
- Marathon services were so wonderfully extensive that I was amazed and took pictures of things like the pink matted start line, all the pink lounge chairs against the water's edge, and the Porta potties like you've never seen: Imagine full wall mirrors, feminine supplies and extra TP, washbasin, wood sided cabins and an elegant looking smooth wooden toilet seat.
- Saturday's events included a free breakfast run, a big pasta party for €15 at the hard rock café, and something else that I forget. I wouldn't have figured these out except that Kathrine emailed some of us. She says it is somewhere on the website.
- It seemed that Finish line food was awesome and extensive plus a medal was given of Majorca pearls.
- The women at lineup seem to be having a super time and bonding as was intended. There were a few men runners - apparently there as Pacers.

I wish there had been more participants and more spectators but this is likely common for an inaugural and especially one with a website so difficult to figure out. Kathrine sounded plenty happy with over 700 women from 20 countries. For Americans, it's a chore to get there.

Our last days in Palma

We had an all-day excursion on Saturday before the marathon which was most unique and showed us the western coast of Majorca. A 100-year old wooden train that went a maximum speed of 20 mph took us to Soller where we caught a funicular down to the Port of Soller. From there it was a hairy boat ride into Calobar – I say hairy as it was caused by heavy winds up about 20 to 30 mph and big waves. The cliffs were magnificent and looked quite precarious when the boat went up near. For this 45 minute ride many people got wet and some should have had upset tummies. I normally would have turned green but I suspect the adrenaline of excitement saved me. Upon reaching our destination we could see the tall mountains very close that reached up to 5000 feet. We would soon learn that world famous bicyclists come to the narrow little winding roads to train in these extremely steep mountain roads.



<http://www.mydestination.com/mallorca/regionalinfo/6176460/sa-calobra>

After a short hike through the canyons and then a long lunch we got on the bus and ventured back. That road was amazingly narrow and sometimes the turns were so extreme that the road had many 180 degree bends and at one place needed a bridge across the road to make the full circle.

After we were through the high peaks of the mountains we went through some small towns and then into the larger town called Inca. One place was a large water reservoir; we learned that Majorca has at least four major desalination plants. I thought this town named Inca was appropriate as I recalled the Inca Trail in Peru. As usual, buses stop at tourist shopping areas where we have long enough to buy leather goods or drink the local liquor. Guess what we spent our time doing.

They have a number of liquors that are more like grappa. Palo is practically black. It is so black that it leaves your tongue and mouth black and has a strong licorice taste. It was developed from bark of a tree and was said to keep you from getting malaria. I haven't seen any mosquitoes but I figure I'm pretty safe from malaria now. <http://www.spanish-wines.org/spanish-liqueurs-palo-de-mallorca.html>

Flight from Majorca to Barcelona

When I booked our flight I figured that I would catch a cheapo air between Majorca and Barcelona. But United offered me a silly connection for no additional cost or miles. I like FREE. If you can picture the map you will laugh at this but we went from Majorca to Zürich and then from Zürich back to Barcelona. It was close to 4 1/2 hours traveling – plus flight delays. But then realize that we were on a first-class ticket so we were eating and drinking all of that 4 1/2 hours and or in first class lounges. But I did think that we probably should have taken the short ferry ride from Majorca to Barcelona and I'm almost glad to now learn that even the hydrofoil takes eight hours.

It wasn't until nearly midnight that we entered our apartment. We should have been bleary-eyed but we could hardly believe our bleary-eyes. The apartment was magnificent and beyond belief and may be the best that we have ever had. I'll save that for a later report.

Onto Barcelona – a Catalan Country



We'd been looking at Barcelona for at least a year and Tom had honed in on a special apartment that I thought too extravagant. You will see who won out. And going to Majorca was just a good excuse to add on extravagant Barcelona stay though he did negotiate a somewhat better price. This was NOT high season, after all.

Barcelona apartment – a reason for going <http://www.holidaylettings.co.uk/content/rentals/b...>

Luxury Suite II is state-of-the-art 120m2 apartment with one suite with king size bed 2 x 2 m and another suite with twin beds that can be separated. A living area with two chaise longue is the perfect space to chill and relax. The apartment counts with a very spacious bathroom with a double shower and bathtub and another ensuite bathroom.

The apartment is fully equipped with top brand appliances, including three 46-inch flat screen TVs with international channels and there is an audio system in every room, which can be customized so you can create a different atmosphere in any room. We have another "sister" apartment, Luxury Suite I with similar features and style but with one bedroom, which can be rented together or separately. The total capacity of these two is 6 people and there is a possibility of placing an extra bed for a child. Both apartments share common access area as shown in the pictures. Our guests will be delighted to experience this unique Luxury Suite experience. Features and Facilities - Internet access, DVD player, Staffed property, Boat available; Central heating, Air conditioning, TV, CD player, Telephone, Safe, Satellite TV, Wi-Fi; Kettle, Toaster, Iron, Hair dryer; Clothes dryer, Dishwasher, Cooker, Microwave, Fridge, Freezer, Washing machine; Linen provided, Towels provided, Outdoors - Balcony or terrace

Located within the historic building Jaume Forn, built by architect Domenec Boadain 1904. Modernist style, with special moulded ceilings, floors and hydraulic angle leaded glass windows by the company Rigalt i Granell. All these elements have been recovered and carefully restored to preserve the property style. The remodeling was done with a prestigious interior designer achieving a contemporary and elegant result aiming for maximum customization in order to get a sense of comfort and exclusivity for guests. To achieve this we used the best materials, fabrics and have carefully selected paintings, antiques and a splendid library (Guinovart, Frederic Mares, Millares, Sert). Privileged location: Two blocks from Paseo de Gracia, on the fourth floor this is a corner building facing south with lots of natural light throughout the day. At the same crossing there are four houses with these characteristics; high-quality original architecture. The facade, the concierge, the location gives you the feeling of experiencing the Example at its best. This property is staffed, meaning that the apartment is cleaned every day. We offer concierge services for planning activities like sailing, wine tasting or getting tickets to a football match or concert in advance.

The Costa Brava/Catalonia/Barcelona region - Barcelona and Catalonia in general are one of Europe's top destinations due to their history, culture, architecture, mild climate (but with ski resorts within a 2 hour drive in winter), vineyards, beach, and nightlife. Next to Costa del Sol, Costa Brava has amazing golden beaches, rocky gorges, unspoiled nooks, sheltered coves, and some of the most attractive and breath taken scenery in the Mediterranean. Certainly the perfect holiday escape. Barcelona - Local attractions are the Old Quarter, Gaudi buildings (the Tourist bus stops right outside the marina), Spanish cuisine, beach & watersports attractions, Wine country tours, Sailing day trips to Sitges.





We were certain the leather walls were tufted and had to touch them to realize that it was all trompe de l'oeil. Everything was pricey and quality.

Why would anyone rent out such a place? A friend posits the following:

- Changed his mind?
- Broke up with his partner, and now this place reminds him of his partner who he hates?

- Tax shelter or some kind of tax investment or safe place to put his money because he lives in country with bad economy?
- So rich it's now beneath him/her?
- He's an idiot?
- All of the above? None of the above?

I would guess that the apartment was a fun project, that he holidays here sometimes, all of which is suggested by the many coffee table art and architectural books, piles of current magazines, and candles.

Comments in return to Tom sending pictures: (1) I like how everyone is pulling out and dusting off their best adjectives and superlatives...exuberant is a good one from previous email. (2) I think exuberant is a pretty close description of the visual effect. (3) It's all a bit beyond belief but beautiful/dreamlike/beyond modern/startling/but certainly amazing.

The best? Our favorite?

Maybe but they all have their own reasons for being 'the best' and this was probably the best for quality and richness. Our place in Varenna on Lake Como was the best for the view though it tied with the home in Cap D'Ail on the French Riviera, though it had the added specialness of being a short shore walk into Monaco. My favorite has been one in Paris's Palais Royal as much for the historical significance of the location but I was fully enchanted with one in the Champs d'Mars as much because the huge skylight showed the Eiffel Tower. Brugge was tiny but elegant and right in the city so the best for there. San Francisco was huge and on Nob Hill and we called it 'the best' then. One can't forget the magnificent setting and ancient history of the modernized whole house hanging over the Dordogne River. Tom chooses well and life is good.

One has to eat – a priority for some, a requirement for the other

We found a favorite restaurant in Barcelona recommended by concierge in a fancy hotel. We also found a favorite in Majorca as a result of a suggestion. In the Barcelona restaurant they had a menu of the day with five choices as starters, then six main courses to choose from, then six desserts to choose from, coffee, AND A WHOLE BOTTLE OF WINE or waterand all for the princely sum of 13 euro!!! And all the food was delicious. One lunch Diana had squid as a main course and Tom had roast veal in a great sauce. The picture is a timbale of vegetables.



Tourist

It was a book called "Shadow of the Wind" by Carlos Ruiz Zafos that got me interested in Barcelona in the first place. One could spend lots more time and our week was surely not enough. Left over for my 'next' trip . . . a boat tour, the cable car up to the Olympic site, opera house, flamenco and guitar concert in the palace of music and more wandering of the food markets. I'd check out www.runnerbeantours.com and www.DiscoverWalks.com . A day trip to Montserrat monastery which happened to coincidentally be the subject of a book I was reading.

We did wander **La Rambla** and were very careful of the famous pick pockets; enjoyed the rows of creative mimes. We went into three different markets with the main one being **La Boqueria** off La Rambla. A skip-the-lines two hour tour



of **Sagrada Familia** then our own tour of the mainstay **Cathedral** where they let you walk on the rooftop. It was near to the Roman walls and old city. It felt like we saw ALL of Barcelona on the multiple routes of the hop on/hop off bus tour. We took separate guided tours of Gaudi's **Park Guell**, **Batllo Casa** and **Casa Mila aka La Pedrera**. We took a guided tour and heard the London Philharmonic rehearsing in the **Palace of Catalan Music**. We walked to their park and under their **Arc de Triomf**. But unless you do a quick "fly-over" there's no way to touch even the main sites in a week so a return visit is needed. That might happen in conjunction with a hike next year.

Was Gaudi a genius or a nut case?

Maybe he was some of both? Casa Batllo was impressive. <http://www.casabatllo.es/en> Live able and like able and so special that some family makes it available to tourists. Sagrada Familia was Disneyesque. See what it might one day become when it is finished. It was only started 100 years ago or so and might be finished in 2035. <http://gizmodo.com/heres-how-sagrada-familia-will-look-when-its-finally-1400455342/all>. The lines to get in were so long that some of the building will be completed before the end of the line gets in (smile). We were so impressed to buy a pricey CD with book. Yet if Gaudi was a genius and this style is so appealing, then why don't we see more of it in later generations? http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antoni_Gaud%C3%A9 It might be of interest that no tours were reasonably priced and entry to just one Casa was in the 35 Euro per person range.

Not so long ago
A man dreamed
Of a City
In his dream, the dragons had
Scales of tiles
The house smiles
Of wrought iron and the buildings the
Waves of the sea
And
Mountains
Barcelona was the open workshop which
Gave shape to the imagination of this genius

Tom's description in an email home (he was so struck at seeing Casa Batllo that he declared that might be worth the trip in itself.) *Almost 9pm and we're just home after walking 150 miles or so. I love Paris architecture but this is not to be believed. And not just the Gaudi things - I just couldn't stop taking pictures today. We stopped in at a fancy hotel to talk to the concierge about tours and got a tip on a place to eat lunch. Tapas - the specialty of Spain it seems. Wonderful. We sat next to a nice young fellow from Panama who is living here after completing his MBA in finance here. He helped us a bit with the menu and we had a nice conversation. This evening we're having pate and goat cheese with a bit of wine that we bought at this huge (I mean HUGE) market that Diana had read about. You'll love the pictures.*

A tiny aside note about the apartment - the sound system is piped to every room including both bathrooms - each with its own volume control. Also, each bedroom and the living room have big flat screens. The place is full of books and magazines and things, just as if someone lived here full time (which is not the case). There are more lights (and switches) than any place I've EVER seen. Up lights, down lights, accent lights, table lamps, floor lamps. The owner is of course very wealthy and the apartment would probably be in the 2-5 million euro range (at LEAST!!) Exquisite and no expense was spared. (I just knew I had to stay here and sure glad Diana decided on the Mallorca marathon which helped us decide to visit). The only down side is it's on a major street with heavy traffic night and day which means we can't sleep in that big post framed bed as it's on the front side of the apartment. The twin bedded (more like twin 3/4 beds) back bedroom is very quiet though. Large bathrooms and deluxe walk in showers (there is a special tub but we almost never use a tub). It's very likely we'll return another time.

The Asians – were Americans so ugly? Probably!

Tom and I have a new observation from our last few trips. The Asians are probably looking very much like the Americans appeared in the 60s. Generally they are a little bit obnoxious, they are cocky travelers. They don't mind dropping their garbage, they are spending as fast as they can, and they are buying all the most fashionable and pricey clothes. Just look into a Louis Vuitton or Escada or an Armani and especially a Chanel and you see loads of young little Asians with many purchases and decked out in the newest and wildest. Sort of disgusting to see them and remember that's what the Ugly American must have looked like in Europe when our money was cheap.

Barcelona pictures

The web being so full of pictures, and then Tom's Photo Show(s) being in the making, that I don't feel a need to add more pages of tourist pictures. He was so impressed that he is talking about having three separate photo shows at www.TomsKoi.com of Majorca, Barcelona, and the apartment.

Miscellaneous observations on Barcelona

- Restaurants commonly specialize in tapas. Filipino staff with good English is the norm.
- Street plan is squared with corners cut off so every intersection has a square appearance. Everyone abides by the traffic lights and for good reason: Cycles whiz by at 70 mph. I never saw jay walking.
- Parks were included in the original plan but developers apparently nixed the green places the city needs. There are tree lined streets but a park let alone a green park is rare.
- Sidewalk surfaces are patterned and not just concrete. Many streets have different patterns. One is designed by Gaudi.
- Lots of rain and little sun in March/April. Surely that's better than hoards of tourist.
- La Rambla said to be THE place to get pick pocketed in all of Europe. Per everyone including Rick Steves. It's rare to have muggings fortunately.
- Balconies are required living? Everyone seems to have some sort of ledge or balcony on which to watch traffic.
- Gay rights must have been here long before in the US. There seems a comfort zone for displays of affection.
- Tourism even off season requires pre booking for many of the houses, churches and theaters. For Gaudi's Sagrada Familia the line was at least two blocks long. Just for the tickets. Or pay up for a private tour as we did.
- Meal hours require pre 1:30pm or pre 7:30pm or there are long lines. And this is low season. Business is good. Shops suggest spending is plentiful.

Itinerary

Mon Mar 24

9:35pm Depart Newark EWR via LH413

Tue Mar 25

10:30am Arrive Munich MUC for plane change

11:30am Depart Munich MUC via LH2368

12:30pm Arrive Zurich ZRH for plane change

3:20pm Depart Zurich ZRH via LX2150

5:05pm Arrive Palma Mallorca PMI

Hotel Can Cera Hotel – 5 nights for deluxe double room
Carrer Convent Sant Francesc, 8, Palma de Mallorca 07001

Tele: 34971715012 marketing@cvancerahotel.com <http://cancerahotel.com/en/>

Located in the heart of Palma de Majorca's Old Quarter, Hotel Can Cera occupies one of Old City's most attractive spots. Can Cera offers 12 Suites as well as a restaurant, spa and warmly welcoming common areas. The hotel provides all comforts and amenities you expect from a luxury establishment. At over 700 years old, Can Cera has one of the longest histories in Palma. The building dates back to before 1232 when Jaume I conquered the island with Catalan and Aragonese troops.

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Our hotel is located in the heart of the old town of Palma, 5 minutes walking from the cathedral. It is really easy and quick to arrive from here to the start line at Parc de la Mar.

Taxi to hotel - from the airport to the hotel the easiest way is by taxi. In 15 minutes you will arrive to the hotel and it cost approximately 20€.

Host Hotel Kathrine staying at the Hotel Mirador www.hotelmirador.es/en/ It's 4-star but not particularly flash, but only a 20-minute walk to the start.

Sat Mar 29

Expo - There will be an expo; it will be connected to the El Corte Ingles Dept. store, location to be announced.

Sun Mar 30

9:00am Start of marathon and 10K - <http://www.261wm.com/en/> -

The course: The race start and finish line are on Parc de La Mar, right behind the Palma de Mallorca Cathedral. The start of both the marathon and 10K is 9 a.m.; they start together. Participants must

complete the course by 3:00 p.m., time limit: 6:00 hours. The Cathedral is a central landmark of Mallorca. You can see this on the map on the race website www.261wm.com/en/img/mapa_carrera.jpg

The course is one big 10K loop first going east and then back to the finish line where the 10K runners finish and the marathoners keep going, this time west around the waterfront on another 10K loop, which you do 3 times. Plenty of toilets and water stations. The course is designed to enjoy the flat, fast waterfront and get a maximum number of spectators.

5:45pm Depart Palma Mallorca PMI via LX2151
7:40pm Arrive Zurich ZRH for plane change
8:50pm Depart Zurich ZRH via LX1950
10:35pm Arrive Barcelona BCN

Car arranged through apartment manager Sergie. We will be met and driver will have a sign. Sergie will be at apartment

Apartment Carrer de Roger de Llúria 82, 08009 Barcelona, Spain – 6 nights
c/o Sergio Ravenet Huveneers, Cell +34 639727411
sergio.ravenet_1g4182@bm.holidaylettings.co.uk
<http://www.holidaylettings.co.uk/content/rentals/b...>

Sat Apr 5

8:05am Depart Barcelona BCN via LH1137
10:15pm Arrive Frankfurt FRA for plane change

1:20pm Depart Frankfurt FRA via LH402
3:50pm Arrive Newark EWR

Why 261 Women's Marathon?

Boston 1967 - using only her initials, twenty-year-old runner Kathrine Switzer signed up for the famous Boston Marathon unaware women were not allowed. When the race director saw her in his race wearing an official bib number, he became infuriated and attacked Kathrine, tried to pull off her numbers and push her off the course. Thanks to her boyfriend, who bounced the official off the course instead, Kathrine kept the number and courageously finished the race. The bib number - 261.



The ultimate challenge is the Marathon, 42.2 km/ 26.2 miles of focus and determination. When a woman runs a marathon, she knows she can do anything, and that is why the 261 Women's Marathon has been created: to give women everywhere a global opportunity to run a marathon that has been uniquely designed just for her: challenging but welcoming; strong but feminine; accessible but exotic.



Over the years '261' has come to represent determination and fearlessness in the face of challenge, because everyone understands from this story the difficulty in overcoming all of life's challenges. Over those same years, more and more women around the world have embraced the activity of running and find the challenges and rewards they experience from it make them strong and fearless. "We know about challenges!" they say.



<http://www.runfuntravel.com/event.php?e=44> – better info from this Australian travel agency.

The Course - The 261WM starts at Passeig del Born and follows a coastal out and back course before finishing at Parc del Mar.

Race Pack Collection - Race packs are collected from the 261 Women's Marathon Expo, from Thursday 27 March to Saturday 29 March. Photo id (eg identity card, passport, etc) must be provided in order to collect your race pack. No other person is permitted to collect your race pack on your behalf.

Expo - The 261WM Expo is the location of race number pick up for the 261 Women's Marathon. Much more, The 261 WM Expo highlights the latest lifestyle, fitness, wellness, health, and nutrition trends. The Expo will host national and international exhibitors and offer everything related to sports performance, functional wear, nutrition, sports medicine, active vacations and much more. We encourage participants to use public transportation when traveling to the Expo. The Expo location will be announced shortly. (It was not available as of 1/23/14.)

Opening hours: 2-8pm Thurs; 10-9pm Fri; 10-6pm Sat.

Start Time - Marathon & 10km: 9:00am with 6 hour time limit to 3pm.

Timing - Electronic (chip) timing will be used for all runners and will be collected with your race pack.

EXCLUSIVE MALLORCA

Mallorca has a certain something that makes you want to come back. Some of our visitors are movie stars, athletes, politicians, renowned business people and international artists, all in all people who want to treat themselves to a piece of paradise. Because Mallorca is a natural paradise in Europe, no more than a stone's throw away, just a few hours flight from home. Visitors are greeted by the turquoise sea and the almost year round bright sunny weather. Mallorca is the perfect destination if you are looking for quality holidays, an exquisite service and luxury products.

The island of Mallorca is internationally known for its warm weather, its gastronomy and handicrafts typical elements and, of course, for its wonderful beaches. The nearly 365 beaches around the entire island, are one of the main motivations for tourists from around the world choose to come to spend their holidays in Mallorca. A fine white sand, warm crystal waters and equipment to enjoy any way you choose is what you can find in any of these beaches to North, South, East and West of the geography of the Balearic capital

DISCOVER PALMA DE MALLORCA

Is the capital of the island of Majorca and enjoys an excellent climate all year round (with an average annual temperature of 17.9 °C). Known as a main tourist destination in Mediterranean and a big sports offer. It also has an attractive historic quarter. The Cathedral, the Almudaina Palace, the Lonja fish market and Plaza Mayor are some of the sites that are well worth visiting.



The landscape of the island is full of coves, beaches and cliffs on the coast, and inland you will find typical towns and mountain ranges up to 1,500 metres high. The variety of the landscape and culture invites visitors to explore every corner of Majorca and to find out more about the gastronomy of the island.

Palma de Mallorca has a long tourist tradition which is reflected in the wide range of facilities and services on offer. But what really makes this city unique is the blend of influences and traditions of the peoples that have settled here over centuries.

Illustrious civilizations such as those of the Phoenicians, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Muslims and Christians have shaped the development of the city. Over time, Palma de Mallorca has become a modern, cosmopolitan city rich in possibilities, which welcomes visitors with open arms all year round.

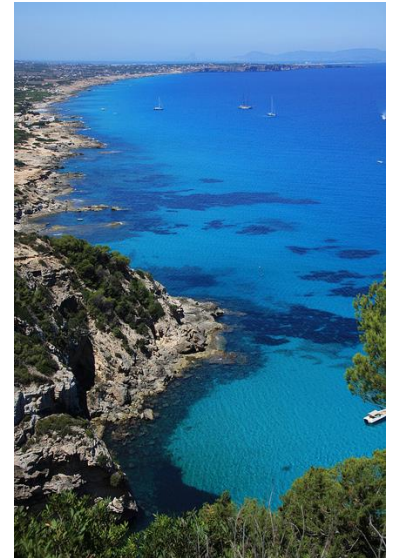


OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

The language - Palma is a diversified city, where you will be able to hear a great diversity of languages. This fact is due to the city's high volume of tourists. Mallorca, as well as the remaining Balearic Islands, has two official languages: the Catalan, the island's language, and Spanish, the official language of the Spanish State.

The currency -Mallorca has an official currency, the Euro, the same as all the other countries within the European Union who have joined the Monetary Union.

Passports - The citizens of the European Union and those of some Western European Union countries are



admitted by using the national identity card. Citizens of other countries will need a valid passport or a passport and a visa, according to the case. Please request further information at the Spanish embassies and consulates.

Official time - The official time on the Balearic Islands is the same as the time on the Spanish mainland: During autumn-winter, GMT+1; During the spring-summer, GMT+2.

The VAT - The VAT (IVA) or Value Added Tax (Impuesto sobre el Valor Añadido) is applied on all products and services. At restaurants, hotels and agrarian tourism centres, the VAT amounts to 7%. Citizens of non-EU member countries visiting the island may request the refund of the VAT for purchases exceeding 60,10 Euros (tax-free). In order to request the VAT refund, you must show the invoice of the purchased good at the customs export department of the last European Union member country you will be visiting.

Electricity - The electric current on the island is normally 220 volts.

Telephone calls (to and from Spain) - Should you wish to call Spain from abroad, the international code is 34. Should you wish to call abroad, please dial 00 (International Service), plus the country code + city code + the telephone number of the person you wish to call.

SHOPPING

Traditional and exclusive atmosphere

Palma is always a great place for a day's shopping. And that's because this Mediterranean city offers the charms of exclusive shopping areas in combination with traditional small establishments which are perfect for discovering the craftsmanship handed down over hundreds of years, or to pick up a few typical products.

If you are after top labels and treats from the ultimate in fashionable boutiques, the best idea is to take a stroll around the Plaza Weyler square, Calle Unión, Plaza Joan Carles I and Avenida Jaume III, where shopping is a philosophy of life. You will also find jewellers offering the quality of Majorca's pearls, numerous home décor shops, and art galleries where you can pick up a special souvenir of the city.

A more traditional atmosphere can be found in the streets around the old quarter like the Paseo por la Artesanía ("Artisans' Avenue"), and the Plaza Llorenç Bisbal and Plaza Mayor squares (with its typical open-air market). Here visitors can buy hand-made products in leather, glass, iron, wood... It's also a unique opportunity to see master craftsmen as they work.

Opening times. Most of the shops and shopping centres are open from 10am-8pm, and on several Sundays throughout the year.

How to pay. Most people pay in cash or with a credit card, for which you always need to show your passport or identity card.

GASTRONOMIC



The culinary offer in the Balearic Islands remains true to the principles of Mediterranean cuisine. Designation of Origin products such as sobrasada, Mahón cheese and Binissalem-Mallorca wine, as well as traditional recipes from the area, can be tasted in Palma. Tumblet (a vegetable stew with potatoes, fried peppers and aubergines in tomato purée), fish with rice and pa amb oli (a slice of bread with oil and tomato) are not to be missed. Game meat, fish, seafood, fruit and vegetables are the proof of the gastronomic variety of the isles. And for dessert, the best thing to have is an ensaimada, and one of the liquors from the area (palo, gin or herbs).

The best way to get a feel of the most typical cuisine of Palma is to visit any of its old cafés and traditional bakeries. There are also over 1,000 restaurants in the city, which as well as the most typical dishes, also offer a wide range of cuisines from all over the world, and creations by internationally-renowned chefs. The most popular restaurants are to be found in several areas: the old part of town, on the seafront promenade, Paseo del Born, Santa Catalina, Es Molinar...

And here's a tip: if you want to buy typical products like sobrasadas, cheese, almonds, cakes and pastries and suchlike, the best idea is to visit one of the charming typical markets like the El Olivar market.

