

# Ibiza's Other Side

Once known only as a party island, Ibiza is also a peaceful idyllic spot to enjoy more relaxing holidays...

For many people, Ibiza conjures up images of noisy nightclubs and fast-food restaurants.

Although it's one of Europe's party hotspots, much of the activity is contained within the bustling west coast resort of San Antonio, leaving the rest of the island to those seeking a different kind of holiday.

We wanted a relaxing break amid lush landscapes where golden beaches are washed by crystal clear waters and sightseeing opportunities aplenty. Ibiza didn't disappoint.

A cloudless sky was a permanent fixture as we explored Ibiza's secluded coves, wandered around sleepy hilltop villages, marvelled at its towering cliffs and lounged on many of its 80-plus beaches.

Our base was Santa Eulalia, an attractive east coast town favoured by families and couples. Surrounded by pine-clad hills, it's a peaceful resort boasting a shapely promenade fringed by

open-air cafes and restaurants, marina and lovely beach.

We spent many evenings strolling along the sea front before returning to our hotel, Palladium Hotel Don Carlos, with its beach-side setting, friendly staff and tasty food.

For those who enjoy a dip in the Med, there's a beach around every corner. We loved Cala Salada, a protected sandy cove. Although just 20 minutes from brash San Antonio, it's a world away where the silence is

broken only by the laughter of children playing in the water.

On the south coast you'll find plenty of space on Platja d'en Bossa's two-mile long beach.

Further along is Cala d'Hort – steep forested hills form a picturesque backdrop to a sublime beach looking out to Es Vedrà, a stunning 1100-foot high chunk of rock by the shore.

## Not just beaches

Ibiza may be brimming over with beaches of all shapes and

sizes but it's worth dragging yourself away to sample what else the island offers.

Measuring just 28 miles by 16, it's an ideal size for exploring by hire car (try motoluis.com). Everywhere is reachable within an hour and once you venture off main roads, you can drive for miles without seeing another car.

En route to the north one day, we meandered through open countryside, where fertile red earth punctuated by swathes of olive and almond trees stretched towards tree-covered hills.

The island's northern region is the most mountainous and sparsely populated. It's also home to Cova de Can Marçà, Ibiza's biggest cave system. We

joined a guided tour and wove our way past impressive stalactites and stalagmites within this subterranean world.

## Take a walk

The 100,000-year-old cave network was only discovered 100 years ago. Smugglers used it for concealing contraband tobacco, but now it's one of the island's top tourist attractions.

Returning to Santa Eulalia, we stopped at a hippy market in Sant Carles de la Ràpita. During the 1960s and 70s, Ibiza was a magnet for hippies, now found selling their wares.

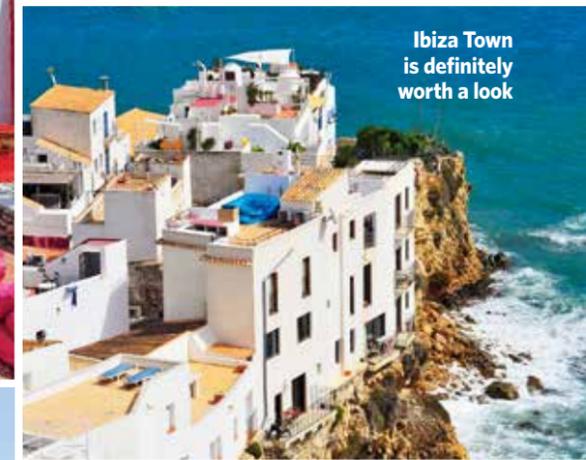
We were also keen to explore the country on foot. Wanting to learn about what makes Ibiza tick, we booked Simon, a Brit who knows the island inside-out and works at walkingibiza.com. Exploring the craggy headlands and coves was one of the week's highlights.

## Magical island

A must for any itinerary is a visit to Ibiza Town, among the



Visit the lush hippy market



Ibiza Town is definitely worth a look

## Spirited Adventurers

Great For

Pack hiking boots and head off the beaten track on one of Ibiza's walking routes. Book a guide at [WalkingIbiza.com](http://WalkingIbiza.com) (0800 088 5499) and enjoy your own private walk or one of the company's community walks.



Ibiza has many hidden gems

Med's most scenic ports. We wandered through narrow streets soaking up the atmosphere before entering the Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the high walls, we marvelled at the cobbled lanes, ancient courtyards and historic buildings, including castle and cathedral.

Another UNESCO site is by the coast. History enthusiasts will delight in the remains of a Phoenician settlement at Sa Caleta. Dating from the 8th

century BC, it was only unearthed in the 1990s.

Our holiday flew by and we spent our final night watching a ruby red sun sink below the horizon at Platjes de Comte. Early Phoenician settlers regarded Ibiza as a magic isle blessed by the Gods. After holidaying on this beautiful island, I wouldn't disagree.

## Getting there

easyJet Holidays ([easyjet.com/holidays](http://easyjet.com/holidays)) offers seven nights all-inclusive in the Palladium Hotel Don Carlos in Santa Eulalia from £472pp. Price includes flight and accommodation. For parking at Bristol, from where Richard flew, visit [bristolairport.co.uk/parking](http://bristolairport.co.uk/parking). For more info on Ibiza, go to [www.ibiza.travel](http://www.ibiza.travel).

## Food Lovers

Great For

Olives are aplenty!

To appreciate Ibiza's rich food history, enjoy the sights and tastes of the capital on an Ibiza Food Tour ([IbizaFoodTours.com](http://IbizaFoodTours.com)/0034 608 692 901). For a treat, head to Agroturismo Atzaro ([atzaro.com](http://atzaro.com)) in the heart of the island for delicious food in a tranquil setting.



Words: Richard Webber. Photos: Alamy, Getty, Toby Clarke