

Northern Mallorca



Northern Mallorca is a near ideal mix. The mountain chain of the Serra de Tramuntana meets a restrained mass tourism in a gentle 'clash of civilisations' that allows you to pick and mix in the most pleasant fashion.

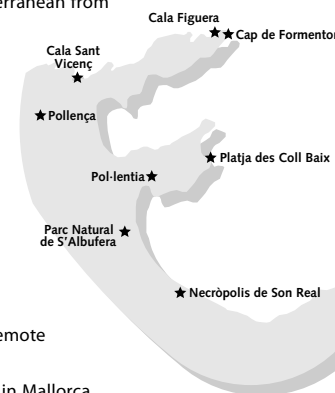
Two magnificent bays, Badia de Pollença and Badia d'Alcúdia, are formed by a trident of imposing capes (Cap de Formentor, Cap des Pinar and Cap Ferrutx). Their high cliff walls stand defiantly against the might of the Mediterranean Sea and offer an extraordinary palette of fine views, as well as plenty of opportunities to stretch your legs hiking and cycling. Between the capes, the long flat coastline offers resort beaches, wilder stretches backed only by dunes and Aleppo pines, a wetlands nature reserve a-twitter with hundreds of bird species, and aquatic activities from diving and sea kayaking to windsurfing and sailing.

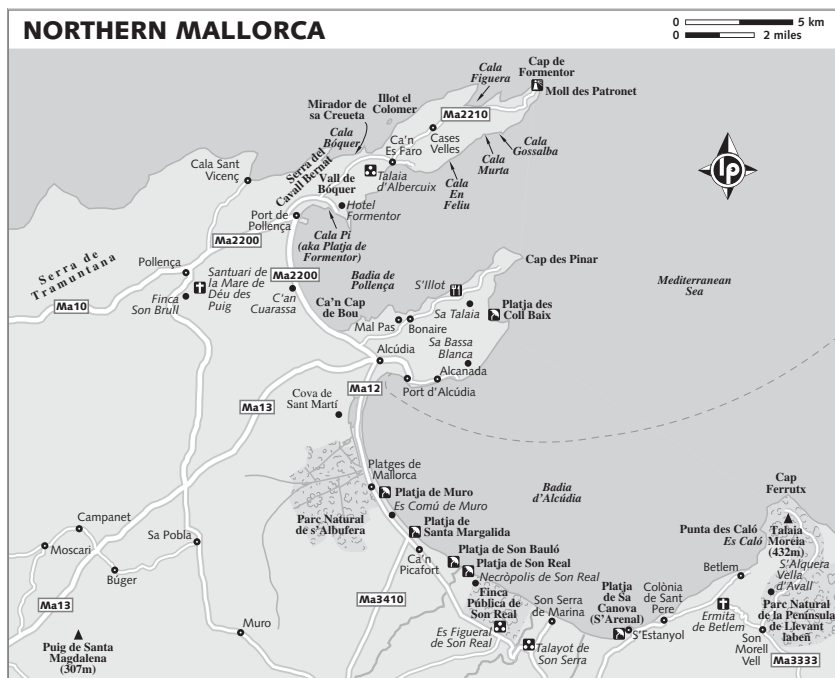
Two of the island's most captivating medieval towns, Pollença and Alcúdia, are nestled here, the latter alongside what remains of Rome's senior Mallorcan settlement, Pol-lentia. Sites more ancient still dot the area, especially around Ca'n Picafort. A couple of hilltop hermitages provide a different perspective on the island's history, and more stunning views of the island.

Accommodation covers the widest possible range, from one of the island's few youth hostels in a superb position on the Cap des Pinar peninsula to the luxury Great Gatsbyesque Hotel Formentor. Fish and chips abound, but culinary diamonds twinkle all over, from traditional hearty island fare to contemporary international seafood spreads.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Absorb the splendour of the island and the Mediterranean from the lighthouse at **Cap de Formentor** (p142)
- Go back several millennia at the **Necròpolis de Son Real** (p149)
- Savour the peace and bird-watching in the **Parc Natural de S'Albufera** (p148)
- Slip into the translucent depths of **Cala Figuera** (p142)
- Relax at the little inlet beaches of **Cala Sant Vicenç** (p138)
- Take a vow and climb the pilgrims' stairway to Calvari in pretty **Pollença** (p134)
- Make the half-hour descent on foot to reach the remote and paradise-like **Platja des Coll Baix** (p148)
- Inspect the remains of what was Rome's main city in Mallorca, **Pol-lentia** (p142)





POLLENÇA & AROUND

This tiny corner of the north has a little of everything. The coquettish town of Pollença makes an enticing base for fanning out to the coastal family resorts of Port de Pollença, with its long beach and bustle, and Cala Sant Vicenç, which is like a pearl farm of aqua-tinged inlets. Further east, the Formentor peninsula stretches in mountainous splendour, ending in the dramatic Cap de Formentor – an 18km strip of breathtaking views.

POLLENÇA

pop 11,330 / elev 41m

Everyone from Winston Churchill to Agatha Christie has at some point hung about at Pollença. A little like its coastal cousin, Deià (p117), Pollença used to be a magnet for artists and is now home to a more or less permanent foreign populace.

Known as Al-Bulansa to the Muslims before 1229, the pretty town you see today was largely formed in the 18th century. Just how it inherited the name from Rome's Pol-lentia

(near present-day Alcúdia) is not entirely clear.

Information

The **tourist office** (☎ 971 535077; www.pollensa.com; Carrer de Sant Domingo 17; ☹ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sun) has information on the town and surrounding area. Check out www.thepollensaguide.com or the printed listings and ads guide *El Puente* (available in the tourist office).

Sights & Activities

They don't call it **Calvari** (Calvary) for nothing. Some pilgrims do it on their knees, but plain walking up the 365 stone steps from

OUR TOP PICKS

- **Hotel** Ermita de la Victòria (p148)
- **Restaurant** La Terraza (p146)
- **Town** Pollença (left)
- **Market/food shop** Enseñat (p138)
- **Festival** Moros i Cristians (p137)

REGIONAL SPECIALITIES

Traditionally, the marshlands of S'Albufera have produced two mainstays: rice and eels. The former is used in many dishes, while the latter most often pops up in the *espinaçada*, an eel-and-spinach pie. On a sweeter note, Pollença is also known for its honey.

the town centre to an 18th-century hilltop chapel (330m), the **Oratori del Calvari**, is penance enough. Your reward may not be in heaven, but there is a little bar next to the chapel from which to savour the views back across the town.

A church was first raised on the site of the **Església de la Mare de Déu dels Àngels** (Plaça Major) shortly after the conquest in 1229. The present edifice dates, like most major Mallorcan churches, to the 18th century.

The **Museu de Pollença** (☎ 971 531166; www.ajpollenca.net in Spanish & Catalan; Carrer de Guillem Cifre de Colonya s/n; admission €1.50; ☹ 10.30am-1.30pm & 5.30-8.30pm Tue-Sat, 10.30am-1.30pm Sun Jul-Sep, 10.30am-1.30pm Tue-Sat Oct-Jun) is worth visiting for the chance to get a look at the 17th-century baroque cloister of what was the Convent of Sant Domingo, in which it is housed, and a bright Buddhist Kalachakra mandala donated by the Dalai Lama to the town in 1990.

The convent church, the **Església de Santa Maria de Déu de Roser**, is a baroque job with barrel vault, gaudy retable and medallions in the ceiling. It is used for the Festival de Pollença (right).

A short way up the Calvari steps lurks the **Museu Martí Vicenç** (☎ 971 532867; www.martivicencs.org; Carrer del Calvari 10; ☹ 10.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10.30-3pm Sat, 11am-1pm Sun). The weaver and artist Martí Vicenç Alemany (born 1926) bought this property, once part of a giant Franciscan monastery which also included the nearby former Església de Monti-Sion, in the 1950s. His works, mostly canvases and textiles, are strewn around several rooms downstairs.

Casa-Museu Dionís Bennàssar (☎ 971 530997; www.museudionisbennassar.com in Spanish & Catalan; Carrer de Roca 14; admission €2; ☹ 10.30am-1.30pm Tue-Sun) was the home of local artist Dionís Bennàssar and is now (with a modern extension) home to a permanent collection of his works. Downstairs are some of his earlier efforts, including etchings, aquarelles and oils, depicting mostly local scenes. Works on the other floors range

from a series on fish that is strangely reminiscent of Miquel Barceló's efforts in Palma's cathedral (p68) to a series of nudes and portraits of dancing girls.

At the north end of town, the **Pont Romà**, a bridge over the Torrent de Sant Jordi, was probably built sometime after the Christian conquest in 1229. It is common for medieval bridges to have become known as Roman bridges in Spain.

South of Pollença, off the Ma2200, what must be one of the most tortuous roads on the island weaves 1.5km in such tight bends towards the hilltop former monastery of **Santuari de la Mare de Déu des Puig** (333m) that you are better off hoofing it. This rambling residence was built in the 14th and 15th centuries and is worth the climb, if only for the magnificent views over Pollença and Alcúdia bays, and the weird, jagged formations of the Formentor peninsula. The Gothic chapel and rectory are highlights of the complex.

Festivals & Events

The town's big event is the **Festes de la Patrona**, which climaxes on 2 August with the staged battle between Moors and Christians (p137).

The **Davallament** (bringing down), an Easter procession held on Good Friday in which the body of Christ is symbolically paraded down the steps of Calvari, is one of the most moving of the island's Easter celebrations.

During the **Festival de Pollença** (www.festivalpollenca.org) in July and August, various genres of music can be heard in concerts in the Sant Domingo cloister.

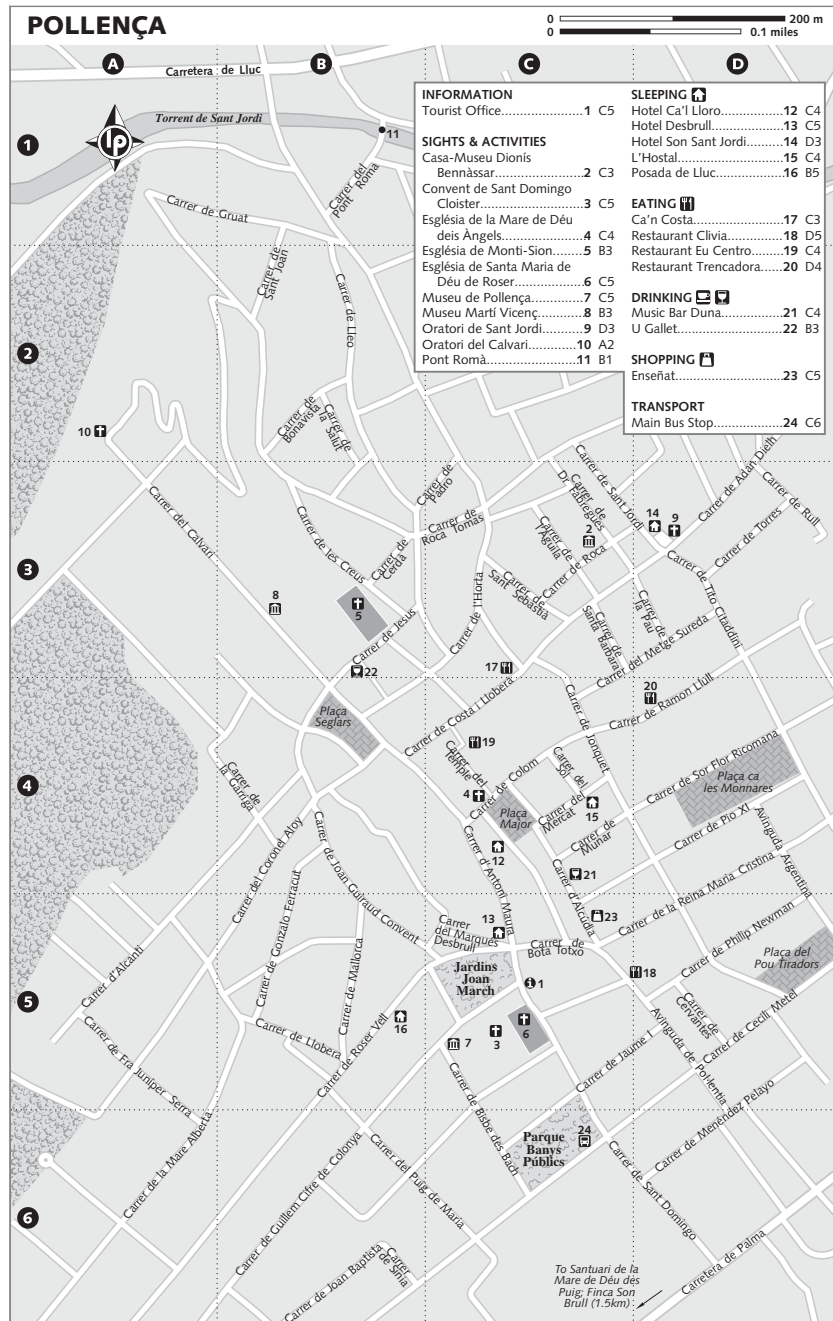
Another big event is **La Fira**, a huge general market held on the second Sunday of November in the Convent of Sant Domingo and other locations around town.

Sleeping

Cheap lodgings are not a reality in the town, which has six hotels.

Santuari de la Mare de Déu des Puig (☎ 971 184132; d €20) The budget conscious who love a view and don't mind the inconvenience of being a 45-minute uphill hike from the town could opt for these former hermits' cells. The lodgings are basic and booking ahead is mandatory.

Hotel Desbrull (☎ 971 535055; www.desbrull.com; Carrer del Marqués Desbrull 7; s/d €86/91; ☹) The best deal in town, with six pleasantly fresh if



TWO-WHEELED EXPLORERS ON THE ECO-TRAILS

Cyclists should get their wheels out onto the **Ecovies** (Eco-Trails; www.conselldemallorca.net/webs/ecovies), a network of biking trails (about 45km) that stretches out between Pollença and Alcúdia and around.

coquettishly small doubles in a modernised stone house. White dominates the décor in rooms and bathrooms and, if you like the contemporary art on the walls, you can buy it.

Hotel Ca'l Lloro (☎ 971 535493; <http://cal-lloro.com>; Carrer d'Antoni Maura 38; s/d €86/107; 🏠) A modern spot in the heart of town, this hotel offers straightforward rooms with parquet floors, whitewash and timber furniture (only the strictly necessary items, no clutter here!). Sit on the rooftop terrace for the views.

L'Hostal (☎ 971 535282; www.hostalpollensa.com; Carrer del Mercat 18; s/d €89/111; 🏠) Equally simple rooms with white tiled floors, a splash of primal colour in the décor and more modern art on the walls. Downstairs a communal lounge is where you dig into breakfast.

our pick Posada de Lluc (☎ 971 535220; www.posadadelluc.com; Carrer del Roser Vell 11; s €90, d €129-158; 🏠) A 15th-century, two-storey town house in central Pollença, it was handed over to the brethren of the Monestir de Lluc (p132) as a resting place for pilgrims. It is now a fetching inn with a variety of rooms. The most straightforward are the doubles on the 1st floor facing the street. Those overlooking the pool and with their own terrace have more of a wow factor.

Hotel Son Sant Jordi (☎ 971 530389; www.hotelsonantjordicom.com; Carrer de Sant Jordi 29; s/d €139/169; 🏠) Occupying a fine old house and sharing a bit of square with the 16th-

century Oratori de Sant Jordi chapel, this hotel has rooms with high ceilings, terracotta floors (with varying styles), canopied beds and plenty of light. Out back, a trim garden frames a curvaceous pool. Prices halve from November to January.

Finca Son Brull (☎ 971 535353; www.sonbrull.com; Carretera Palma-Pollença Km49.8; d €264-369, ste up to €800; 🏠) This is an exquisite retreat set in a grand 18th-century *possessió* (rural estate) about 1.5km south of Pollença. The standard doubles are a tasteful mix of the old and clean-lined modernity (with Bang & Olufsen TV, DVD player and several telephones!). It also boasts a spa, one of the island's top restaurants and a bar set by the old olive press.

Eating

Plaça Major is surrounded by good-natured eateries and café-bars where you can receive sustenance morning, noon and night. But take a look around the rest of town.

Restaurant Eu Centro (☎ 971 535082; Carrer del Temple 3; meals €25, menú del día €8; 🍷 Thu-Tue) Tapas and all the old Mallorcan faves, from *tumbet* to *frit Mallorquí* (sautéed lamb offal). Meat lovers might want to have a go at the *lechona* (suckling pig), which, while not the island's best, is not a bad shot. Inside is over-lit, so you might try for one of three tables in the street.

Restaurant Trencadora (☎ 971 531859; Carrer de Ramon Llull 7; meals €30; 🍷 11am-1am Tue-Sat, 11am-6pm Sun) With its enormous garden, this is perhaps the hippest place to head for a meal. Lounge about afterwards for a drink or two. Friday nights the speciality is BBQ meats and tapas, while on Sunday, brunch carries on until 4pm. Food-wise, the general category is creative Med.

Ca'n Costa (☎ 971 531276; Carrer de Costa i Llobera 11; meal €40-45; 🍷 dinner only Mon-Sat) The rambling old building in which the poet Miquel Costa

MOORS & CHRISTIANS IN IMMORTAL COMBAT

The beginning of August sees the staging of one of the most colourful of Mallorca's festivals. This version of Moros i Cristians (Moors and Christians) celebrates a famous victory by townsfolk over a Moorish raiding party led by the infamous Turkish pirate Dragut (1500–1565) in 1550. The 'battle' is the highpoint of the **Festes de la Patrona** (Feast of the Patron Saint, ie the Virgin Mary). Town folk dressed up as scimitar-waving Moorish pirates and pole-toting villagers engage in several mock engagements, to the thunder of drums and blunderbusses, around town on the afternoon of 2 August. The night before, the town centre is the scene of one almighty piss-up, with folks from all over the island thronging the bars and squares and live concerts blaring through the night from 11pm. No wonder the following day's battles don't get started until 7pm!

i Llobera (p37) was born, and which later housed the town's first cinema, is now the setting for romantic dinners of such oddities as *filete de avestruz* (char-grilled ostrich) and *calamares salteados con chorizo* (calamari sautéed with spicy sausage). They have kids' portions too.

our pick **Restaurant Clivia** (☎ 971 533635; Avinguda Pollentia; meals €45-50; ☺ lunch & dinner Tue & Thu-Sun, dinner Mon & Wed) Set in what was once a private house, this spot offers fine food (especially the fish) prepared and presented with panache. The service is attentive and the ambience tranquil. Try the house speciality, *llobarro de palangre al vi blanc* (wild sea bass steamed in white wine).

Drinking

U Gallet (☎ 971 534879; Carrer de Jesus 40; ☺ 10.30am-2.30pm & 7.30pm-3.30am Tue-Sun, 7.30pm-3.30am Mon) This is where the locals come for a drink, far from the madding (and largely foreign) crown down on the central square. The narrow bar ends in a basic lounge area. If this or a barstool doesn't appeal, the timber tables in the street could be the go.

Music Bar Duna (Carrer d'Alcúdia 1; ☺ 10pm-4am) For those needing more of an urban bar feel, this is the place to come, but not before midnight. Punters crowd around the dimly lit horseshoe bar upstairs and try to talk over the thundering DJ sets. Opening times are enigmatic, to say the least.

Shopping

Ensenat (☎ 971 533618; www.ensenyat.com; Carrer d'Alcúdia 5; ☺ 8.30am-1.30pm & 4.30-8.30pm Mon-Sat, 8.30am-1.30pm Sun) It's the place to pick up gourmet groceries, wines, cheeses and meats. They've been in business since the 1940s.

On Sundays, a produce market is held in Pollença.

Getting There & Away

BUS

From Palma, Bus 340 heads non-stop for Pollença (€4.50, 45 minutes, up to 14 times a day). It heads on to Cala Sant Vicenç and Port de Pollença.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

From Palma, zip along the full length of the Ma13 motorway and follow the turn-off north as this becomes a normal dual-carriageway road. A much more picturesque

approach would see you turn north from Inca up the Ma2130 road and then east along the Ma10.

CALA SANT VICENÇ

pop 270

A tranquil and leafy residential area works itself up into something of a lazy roller of hotels and restaurants on the waterfront, but there is little sense of frenzy. The four jewel-like *cales* (coves) that constitute the *raison d'être* of this low-key resort are worth making for, except perhaps on crowded summer weekends when locals tumble in to compete for the limited towel space.

The **tourist office** (☎ 971 533264; Plaça de Cala Sant Vicenç; ☺ 9am-2pm & 2.30-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat May-Oct) is about 50m inland from Cala Clara.

The first of the beaches, **Cala Barques**, is sandy until you hit the water, when you have to pick your way over rocks to reach submersion depth. Pretty (well, they're all pretty) **Cala Clara** is similar. **Cala Molins** is the biggest of the four, with a deep sandy strand and easy-going access into the shimmering waters of this tranquil inlet. **Cala Carbó**, around the headland, is the smallest and least visited. It wouldn't take more than 20 minutes to walk the entire distance between the four.

Those with no interest in watching afternoon football matches in a pub could walk about 15 minutes along Carrer Temporal from behind Cala Clara and then down Carrer de Dionis Bennàssar. You will hit a rise with park benches and the **Coves de L'Alzineret**, seven funerary caves dug in pre-Talayotic times (c 1600 BC) and simply left here for anyone who wants to poke around.

Sleeping & Eating

our pick **Hostal los Pinos** (☎ 971 531210; www.hostal-lospinos.com; s/d from €36/60; ☺ May-Oct; P ☺) This hotel is set on a leafy hillside off the road between Cala Molins and Cala Carbó. The best of the simple rooms have partial sea views and are technically suites, with separate sleeping and lounge areas and balconies to hang up your beach towel.

Hotel Niu (☎ 971 530100; www.reisdemallorca.com; Cala Barques; s/d €75/144; ☺ May-Oct; P ☺) You can't get much closer to the water than in this 1928 hotel that was one of the first to open here. Rooms are straightforward but with a touch of old-world charm (in the dark timber

fittings and furniture for instance). Some have balconies with superb sea views.

Bistro Balaixa (☎ 971 530659; meals €25; ☺ Sun-Fri) Set back about 100m from Cala Molins on an unnamed street, this is a simple place with internal dining and a terrace below. Pop in for tapas, pasta dishes and a generally odd mix of local, Spanish (*riñones al Jerez*, kidneys cooked in sherry) and Mediterranean options (Italian *bruschette*).

our pick **Cal Patró** (☎ 971 533899; Cala Barques; meals €30-40; ☺ Wed-Mon Easter-Oct) Locals in search of fish don't hesitate and head straight for the 'Captain's House' for fresh catch of the day (like the delicious *gallo San Pedro*, a rich Mediterranean fish). Or you can keep the price down with fish-farm options. Round off with *gató amb gelat*, a Mallorcan treat of almond tart served with almond-flavoured ice cream.

Café Art 66 (☎ 971 534080; Carrer Temporal s/n; ☺ 4pm-2am daily May-Oct, 4pm-2am Fri & Sat Feb-Apr & Nov) This is the place to chill out later in the day. DJ sessions usually accompany the cocktails and you can opt to lounge about inside or out. The décor is overwhelmingly in keeping with the sea theme, with endless shades of blue.

Getting There & Away

Cala Sant Vicenç is 6.5km northeast of Pollença. Take the road towards Port de Pollença and turn north (left, signposted) after 2km. The 340 Palma-Port de Pollença bus runs to Cala Sant Vicenç (€1.10, 15 minutes, up to six times a day) from Pollença and from Port de Pollença.

PORT DE POLLENÇA

pop 5930

On the north shore of the Badia de Pollença, this resort is popular with British families soothed by fish and chips and pints of ale. Sailboards and yachts can be hired on the beaches. South of town the bay's shoreline becomes quite rocky and the beaches are less attractive.

Information

The **tourist office** (☎ 971 865467; Passeig Saralegui; ☺ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 10am-1pm Sun May-Sep, 8am-3pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Oct-Apr) is on the waterfront in front of the marina. The English-language website, www.puertopolensa.com, has listings and sundry tidbits of information.

For medical assistance, the **Clinica Inle** (☎ 971 864466; Passeig de Londres 26) has a 24-hour ambulance service.

Sights & Activities

The beaches immediately south of the main port area are broad, sandy and gentle. Tufts of beach are sprinkled all the way along the shady promenade stretching around the north end of town. As you head south along the bay towards Alcúdia, the sand (what little there is) becomes a grey gravel mix and is frequently awash with dried and fresh poseidon grass (p144). The tail end of this less than winsome stretch, **Ca'n Cap de Bou** (Map p134) and **Sa Marina** (just before entering Alcúdia proper) are popular with wind and kite surfers but otherwise are no great shakes.

They say some of the island's best diving is in the Badia de Pollença. There is plenty of wall and cave action, some reasonable marine life (rays, octopuses, barracuda and more) along the southern flank of the Formentor peninsula, and more popular spots along the southern end of the bay leading to Cap des Pinar.

Scuba Mallorca (☎ 971 868087; www.scubamallorca.com; Carrer d'El Cano 23; 2 boat dives €70, equipment extra €15) is a PADI five-star outfit and one of a couple of dive centres in town.

Sail & Surf Pollença (☎ 971 865346; www.sailsurf.eu; Passeig de Saralegui 134) hires out sailing (from €20 an hour for a Laser) and windsurfing equipment (from €15 an hour for beginners) and organises courses in both activities at various levels. Just opposite them, on the beach, **Kayak Mallorca** (☎ 971 534870; www.kayakmallorca.com) organises sea kayak trips around the bay and off Cap de Formentor (depending on skill levels and numbers). Or you can just hire a kayak for a bit of solo paddling (€10 for an hour, €30 for a day).

Various **boat tours** (☎ 971 864014, 971 864014) are available from June to September around the bay and to Cap de Formentor (€18.50) and Cala Sant Vicenç (€23). Shuttle boats also ferry people to Platja de Formentor (€8.30, 25 minutes). Snoop around the harbour to see what the options are.

Rent March (☎ 971 864784; Carrer de Joan XXIII 89) hires out all sorts of bikes, from simple no-gears jobs (€5 per day) to Onix Obrea 27-gear cycles (€20 per day). They also rent out scooters.

A weekly market is staged in town on Wednesdays.



Sleeping

Hotel Eolo (☎ 971 866550; www.hoteleolo.com; Plaça de l'Enginyer Gabriel Roca 2; s/d €38/70; 🚰 Mar-Oct) Smack in the heart of the action, just back from the marina, are these straightforward digs, built over several floors and with few frills. Rooms have tiled floors, serviceable bathrooms and are kept neat and tidy. The best part is the

view, so try for a room with a balcony. There is a busy pizzeria downstairs.

Hotel Bahía (☎ 971 866562; www.hoposa.com; Passeig Voramar s/n; s/d €66/76, d with sea views €106-134; 🚰 Apr-Oct; 🛏) A 19th-century villa converted into a hotel, the Bahía occupies a waterfront spot along a shady pedestrian esplanade. If you can shell out the extra for sea views, do

so! Rooms are crisp with parquet floors, but those with views (and a couple with balconies) are a treat.

Hotel Llenaire (☎ 971 535251; www.hotelllenaire.com; Camí de Llenaire Km3.8; s/d €218/290; 🚰 🚰 🚰) The most alluring of Port de Pollença's hotels, this largely 19th-century town house dominates the bay (at a perfect height to look across the bay) about 4km inland from the southern limits of town (signposted). The spirit of the grand stone manor has been maintained and the bedrooms are a combination of old and new, with antique furniture, contemporary art and Persian throw rugs on the exquisite tiled floors.

Eating

Don Corleone (☎ 971 867981; Passeig d'Anglada Camarassa 13; meals €7-10; 🚰 Mon-Sat) Sometimes you just feel like a pizza. Problem is, it's easy to be disappointed. This place doesn't look promising, but the pizzas are good enough for Palma folk to make the occasional pilgrimage here.

Celler La Parra (☎ 971 865041; Carrer de Joan XXIII 84; meals €20-30; 🚰 daily) In business since the 1960s, this is about as traditionally Mallorcan as it gets around here. True, the 18th-century wine vats have clearly been dragged in from somewhere else, but it serves up genuine island fare. Fresh fish depends on market prices, or you could go for *lechona* at €15 and finish with a classic Spanish dessert, *pijama* (tinned peach slices, a clump of flan, two balls of ice cream covered in whipped cream with chocolate topping).

our pick **Ca'n Cuarassa** (☎ 971 864266; meals €40; 🚰 9am-11pm; 🚰) This rambling collection of houses sits opposite the water 3km south of central Port de Pollença and offers a large garden dining space and kids' play area. They do a long menu of island and Spanish food. A good starter might be the *espargos verdes frescos a la parrilla con salsa de almendras* (fresh green asparagus in almond sauce), followed by *lenguado con salsa de alcaparras* (sole in a caper sauce). They have a kids' menu too.

Stay (☎ 971 864013; Moll Nou s/n; meals €45; 🚰 daily) The Gassó family, the same folks who operate Ca'n Cuarassa, completely remodelled this seaside haven of mixed Med cooking in 2006. This is seaside chic, with an extensive outdoor dining area out on the pier. Yachties and their ilk hang here, savouring things like *crema ligera de gambas al Riesling* (shrimp cream

with Riesling) and *cigalas a la parrilla* (grilled Dublin Bay prawns). They have a kids' menu and you can have breakfast here too.

Drinking

Port Pollença doesn't exactly go off. You have to feel for those somewhat lost-looking adolescents wandering about late at night, dreaming of Ibiza clubs and wishing they hadn't been dragged here by their insensitive parents.

Orange Lounge Club (Passeig d'Anglada Camarassa s/n; 🚰 7pm-midnight) This is one place worth seeking out. It sets up by the Hotel Daina's waterfront swimming pool for chilling, cocktail-sipping and light DJ sounds. No-one seems to garner the courage to have a dip though!

Getting There & Away

BUS

The 340 bus from Palma to Pollença continues to Port de Pollença (15 minutes direct or 30 minutes via Cala Sant Vicenç). Bus 352 makes the run between Port de Pollença and Ca'n Picafort (€2.20, one hour), stopping at Alcúdia and Port d'Alcúdia along the way.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Port de Pollença lies 7km northeast of Pollença. From here the road to Cap de Formentor unfolds eastward, while the main Ma2200 road heads south around the bay to Alcúdia. There are one motorbike-rental and seven car-rental outlets in Port de Pollença.

CAP DE FORMENTOR

Doubtless one of the most spectacular stretches of Mallorca's coast (and there is sturdy competition), the 18km stretch from Port de Pollença (via the Ma2210) can really only be done with your own motor, bicycle or two legs.

The road quickly climbs away from Port de Pollença, opening up splendid views of the bay. More breathtaking is the **Mirador de Sa Creueta** (232m), 3km northeast of Port de Pollença. From this lookout cliffs plunge into the depths on the peninsula's north coast. To the east, just off the coast, floats the **Illot del Colomer**, a rocky islet. From the same spot you can climb a couple of kilometres up a side road to the **Talaia d'Albercuix** watchtower (380m). It was built to warn of pirates and you can see why; the views extend far out to sea.

WALKERS' OPTIONS

The peninsula offers several challenges for those with itchy feet, including various trails leading down to largely pebbly beaches and inlets. The walk from Port de Pollença to **Cala Bòquer** is signposted off a roundabout on the main road to Cap de Formentor. This valley walk, with the rocky Serra del Cavall Bernat walling off the western flank, is an easy 3km hike. About 11km from Port de Pollença, separate trails lead off left and right from the road (there is some rough parking here) to **Cala Figuera** on the north flank and **Cala Murta** on the south. The former walk is down a bare gully to a narrow shingle beach, where the water's colours are mesmerising. The latter walk is through mostly wooded land to a stony beach. Each takes about 40 minutes down. Near Cala Murta but tougher to reach by land is **Cala Gossalba**. In all cases pack food and drink.

A couple of other small inlets to check out along the coast between Port de Pollença and Cala Murta are **Cala des Caló** and **Cala En Feliu**. Walkers can also hike to or from the cape along the **Camí Vell del Cap**, a poorly defined track that crisscrosses and at times follows the main road. At Port de Pollença you could then link with the GR221 trail that runs the length of the Serra de Tramuntana.

The Pollença and Port de Pollença tourist offices can give you booklets with approximate trail maps, which for these walks should be sufficient.

From here, the Ma2210 sinks down through the woods some 4km to **Platja de Formentor** (aka Platja del Pi). Parking costs €4 for the day.

The **Hotel Formentor** (Map p134; ☎ 971 899101; www.hotelformentor.net; s/d €300/479; ☎ Apr-Oct; P ♿ ♿ ♿) is a jewel of pre-WWII days and a Mallorca classic. The whole area (including the beach and offshore island) was bought by an Argentine businessman in the 1920s and remains private property. From 1929 the ritzy hotel digs have played host to the likes of Grace Kelly, Winston Churchill, Mikhail Gorbachev, John Wayne and the Dalai Lama. Rooms are pleasing without being the latest in grand luxury. The singles are a little small, but the seaside doubles and suites are a taste of paradise, if only for their privileged position.

From here the road slithers another 11km out to the cape and its **lighthouse**, where you'll find a snack joint, views to Cap Ferrutx to the south and a short walking track (the Camí del Moll del Patronet) south to another viewpoint.

The 353 bus runs from Ca'n Picafort to Cap de Formentor (€2.90, one hour 20 minutes, twice daily May to October) and passes through Port d'Alcúdia, Alcúdia and Port de Pollença. Two extra services run between Port de Pollença and Cap de Formentor. The only other option during May to October is the 360 bus from Palma (€5.80; 1½ hours, Monday to Saturday), which departs at 10.15am and stops at Inca and Alcúdia on the way. The return leg leaves at 3.30pm.

BADIA D'ALCÚDIA

The long beaches of this huge bay dominate Mallorca's northeast coast, its broad sweeps of sand stretching from Port d'Alcúdia to Ca'n Picafort.

ALCÚDIA

pop 15,900 / 20m

Wedge between the Badia de Pollença and Badia d'Alcúdia, Alcúdia sits next door to what was once Mallorca's prime Roman settlement. Remnants of the Roman theatre can be seen and the old town (whose name is about all that remains from the Muslim period) is still partly protected by medieval walls.

Information

The **tourist office** (☎ 971 897100; Carrer Major 17; ☎ 9.30am-3pm & 5-7pm Mon, Wed & Fri, 9.30am-3pm Tue, Thu & Sun, 10am-1pm Sat) is in the heart of the old town. The town hall's website (www.alcudia.net) has interactive street maps. For more listings tips and other information check out www.thealcudiaguide.com and www.alcudia.pollensa.blogspot.com.

Sights & Activities

The ruins of the Roman town of **Pol-lentia** (☎ 971 897102; www.pollentia.net; adult/student & senior incl museum €2/1.25; ☎ 9.30am-8.20pm Tue-Sun May-Sep, 10am-4pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr) lie just outside Alcúdia's walls (the entrance is on Avinguda dels Prínceps d'Espanya). Founded

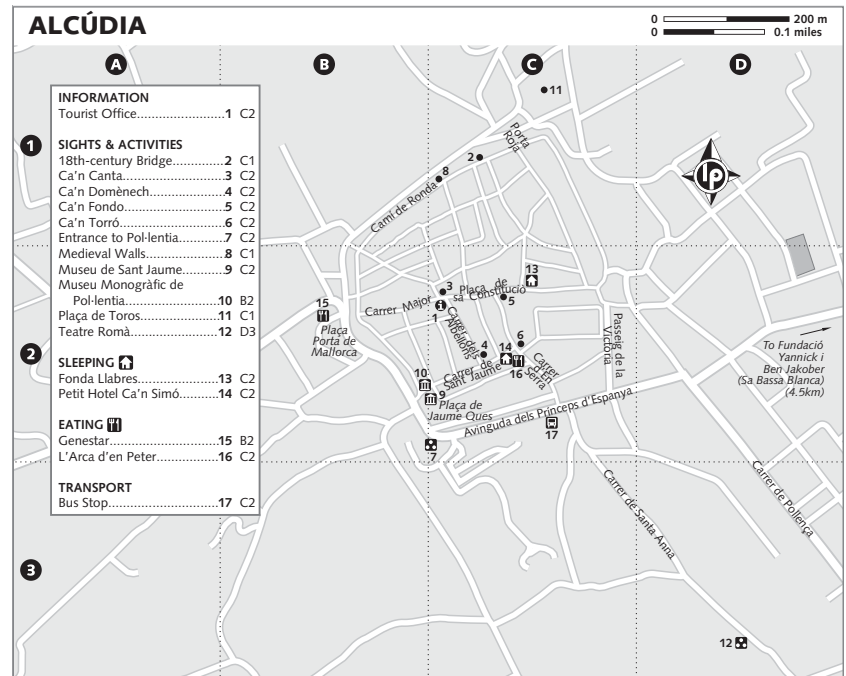
around 70 BC, it was Rome's principal city in Mallorca and is the most important archaeological site on the island. It reached its apogee in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. A visit takes you through three distinct areas. In the northwest corner is the Portella residential area. Signs indicate the layout of three houses in particular – the first and most interesting is the **Casa dels Dos Tresors** (House of the Two Treasures), which stood from the 1st to the 5th centuries AD and was a typical Roman house centred on an atrium. A short stroll away are the remnants of the **Forum**, which boasted three temples and rows of *tabernae* (shops). Finally, you walk another few hundred metres to reach the somewhat crumbly 1st-century AD **Teatre Romà** (Roman Theatre), nowadays used for performances in August.

Back in town, the same ticket gets you entry to the one-room **Museu Monogràfic de Pol-lentia** (☎ 971 547004; www.pollentia.net; Carrer de Sant Jaume 30; ☎ 11am-2pm & 4-7pm Tue-Sun May-Sep, 10am-4pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr), with fragments of statues, coins, jewellery, household figurines of divinities and other odds and ends dug up at the site.

Just across the road in the eponymous church is the **Museu de Sant Jaume** (☎ 971 548665; Plaça de Jaume Ques s/n; adult/child €1/free; ☎ 10am-1pm Mon-Sat), which could hold your attention if you're into priestly vestments and other religious paraphernalia from the past.

Perhaps more interesting is simply walking around town. Although largely rebuilt, the city walls are impressive. Those on the north side are largely the medieval originals. Near the Porta Roja (Red Gate) are remnants of an **18th-century bridge** and, just beyond, the Plaça de Toros (bullring) has been built into a Renaissance-era fortified bastion. Wandering inside the town is well worthwhile. Almost too squeaky clean, it is dotted with handsome mansions. Among them are **Ca'n Domènech** (Carrer dels Albellons 7), **Ca'n Canta** (Carrer Major 18), **Ca'n Torró** (Carrer d'En Serra 15) and **Ca'n Fondo** (Carrer d'En Serra 13).

Want to take a hike? Some 4.5km east of Alcúdia in a relatively isolated house, Sa Bassa Blanca, is the **Fundació Yannick i Ben Jakober** (☎ 971 549880; www.fundacionjakober.org; Camí de Coll Baix s/n; admission free Tue, by guided, prebooked tour only Wed-Sat, adult/child under 10yr €9/free; ☎ 9.30am-12.30pm



& 2.30-5.30pm Tue, guided tours 11am & 4pm Wed-Sat). This is a strange beast, a cultural institution that works on the restoration of artworks and concentrates on children's portraits from the 16th to 19th centuries. Many of these are on permanent display, along with other works of modern and contemporary art. Sculptures by Ben Jakober and Yannick Vu, the British artist couple who live here some of the time, litter the garden. In May you can also visit a rose garden. Follow the signs to Fundació and Bonaire. At the Bodega del Sol restaurant, turn right and keep on down the road, which turns into a potholed track. The foundation is on the right.

Festivals & Events

Tuesday and Sunday are market days in Alcúdia, held on and around Passeig de la Victòria. The big annual market event is the **Fira d'Alcúdia**, held on the first weekend of October and bringing a produce market together with traditional dances, music and parades.

Sleeping

Fonda Llabres (☎ 971 545000; www.fondallabres.com; Plaça de sa Constitució; s/d €30/36; 🍴) Here's a cheerful cheapy overlooking the central square. Good, clean rooms with crisp linen and white tiled floors spread over three storeys. The best have balconies overlooking the square. Downstairs is a lively bar-restaurant.

Petit Hotel Ca'n Simó (☎ 971 549260; www.cansimo.com; Carrer de Sant Jaume 1; s/d €78/106; 🍴 🚿) A renovated 19th-century town house, with seven double rooms. It is wondrous how they managed to squeeze in a little indoor pool, Jacuzzi and fitness room. Out back is a sunny patio, where you can sit down for a meal.

Eating

Genestar (☎ 971 549157; Plaça Porta de Mallorca 1; set meals plus drinks €24; 🍷 lunch & dinner Mon-Sat Sep-Dec, Feb-Jul, dinner Mon-Sat Aug) This modern, designer establishment is an oddly soulless spot just beyond the city walls. Look for the bamboo trunks outside. At just eight tables, enthusiastic punters are served a five-course set meal (the menu changes weekly) that ranges broadly over Mediterranean and international themes. Book ahead.

L'Arca d'en Peter (☎ 971 539178; Carrer d'En Serra 22; meals €25-30; 🍷 May-Oct, lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Sun Nov-Jan, Mar & Apr) Part of the Petit Hotel Ca'n

POSEIDON'S GRASS

Beach lovers are occasionally a little put off by the appearance at the water's edge (or strewn over the beach) of great rafts of what many mistake for algae. This is sea grass, (poseidon grass or *poseidonia*), vital for the hindering of erosion on the seabed. The oxygen it gives off helps clean the water, attracts abundant sealife (some of which lives in among the grass's leaves) and slows global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide. Thick layers of this stuff on some beaches actually help keep them intact. It doesn't make it any more pleasant (especially as it sometimes gives off an unpleasant odour) but perhaps there is some comfort in knowing that its presence is good for the maritime environment.

Simó, this old-town charmer with internal courtyard and exposed stone walls offers mixed Med cookery: anything from *raviolis de foie con salsa de trufas* (foie gras ravioli with truffle sauce) to *carré con polenta al aroma de menta* (lamb and polenta with a hint of mint).

Getting There & Away BUS

The 351 bus from Palma to Platja de Muro calls at Alcúdia (€4.40, one hour, from five to 16 times a day May to October). The service drops to a maximum of five from November to April. Bus 352 connects Ca'n Picafort with Port de Pollença as often as every 15 minutes from May to October. From Ca'n Picafort it costs €1.40 (45 minutes) to Alcúdia. The frequency drops to 11 a day from November to April. Local service 356 connects Alcúdia with Port d'Alcúdia and the beach of Platja d'Alcúdia (€1.10, 15 minutes, every 15 minutes from May to October).

PORT D'ALCÚDIA

pop 1820

Draped along the northeast corner of the Alcúdia bay, Port d'Alcúdia is a busy beach holiday centre. From the original port centre, crammed with older hotels, eateries and bars around the main town marina and fishing harbour, the accommodation sprawl spreads southward into a kind of (dare we say it?) mini-Venice arrangement with canals and

internal lakes. On the seaward side, pleasant beaches are the name of the game.

Information

Main Tourist Office (☎ 971 547257; www.alcudia.net; Passeig Marítim; 🕒 9.30am-8.30pm Easter-Oct) Located in a booth behind the marina.

Tourist Office (☎ 971 892615; Carretera d'Artà 68) Another branch is located further southwest. It can have unreliable opening hours.

Sights & Activities

About 1.6km southwest of the tourist office on Carretera d'Artà, the **Cova de Sant Martí** is an otherworldly grotto. As early as 1268 a religious sanctuary was installed in this 15m-deep hollow. After a miracle brought rain in 1507, chapels to St Martin and St George were erected inside. Today the oldest part of the human-constructed elements are the slippery, mossy steps leading down into this cool cavern.

About 600m inland from the beach is something more appealing for the kids. **Hidropark** (☎ 971 891672; www.hidropark.com; Avinguda del Tucà s/n; adult/child 3-11yr/under 3yr €17/8/free; 🕒 10.30am-6pm

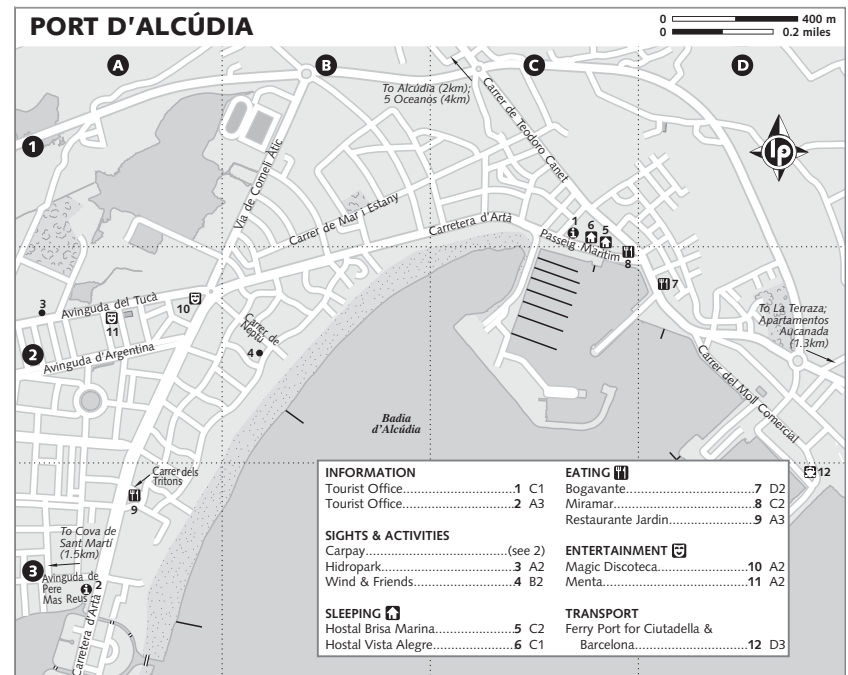
May-Oct) is a typical water park with slides, wave pool and infants' splash pool area.

Numerous excursions run from the port from May to October. **Transportes Marítimos Brisa** (☎ 971 545811; www.tmbriasa.com) offers three daily trips (€16, two hours) on a glass-bottom catamaran to Platja des Coll Baix (p148). A long version of the trip goes to Platja de Formentor (€21, four hours) and runs twice a day. Children go for half price. Other companies abound along the waterfront, offering jaunts around the bay in anything from speed boats to luxury yachts.

Divers should approach **5 Oceanos** (☎ 971 549957; www.5oceanos.com; Avinguda del Mal Pas 1, Bonaire), located in one of the northern suburbs facing the Badia de Pollença. It offers try-out dives (€75 for novices), cave dives and dives around Cap de Formentor.

Parapente Alfàbia (☎ 971 891366 or 687 626536; www.parapentealfabia.com) offers the chance to go paragliding. An accompanied flight of about 20 minutes for beginners costs €80. Ask for Oscar.

At **Wind & Friends** (☎ 627 086950; www.windfriends.com; Carrer de Neptú; 🕒 Apr-Oct), next to the Hotel



Sunwing on the waterfront, you can get organised for sailing, windsurfing and kite surfing. A four-day course in windsurfing will cost €195.

Festivals & Events

The **Festival de Sant Pere** celebrates the port's patron saint, Peter, on 29 June. The week running up to this day is a time of concerts, kids' shows and activities. On the big day a statue of the Sant Pere is paraded on land and sea.

Sleeping

Port d'Alcúdia teems with hotels and apartments. The tourist offices can provide lists and you can also search on www.alcudiahotels.com.

Hostal Vista Alegre (☎ 971 547347; www.hvista-alegre.com; Passeig Marítim 22; s/d €20/35; 🏠) Friendly managers run this tidy hotel just by the marina in the heart of the town. The singles are pokey and have no air-con, while the doubles have either sea views (and breeze) or air-con. The doubles have their own bathroom.

Hostal Brisa Marina (☎ 971 549450; www.hbrisaamarina.com; Passeig Marítim 22; s/d €35/50, d with sea views €65-75; 🏠) Next door, a similar deal is offered. Although the rooms have a more modern, welcoming feel and crisp décor, there really isn't all that much in it.

Apartamentos Aucanada (☎ 971 545402; www.stilhotels.com; Carrer de S'illot s/n; apt €90-104; 🏠 May-Oct; 🚗) About 1.5km east of central Port d'Alcúdia and just short of the exclusive golf course, you wind up in the privileged residential area of Alcanada (Aucanada). This leafy area offers a hotel and these simple one- and two-bed apartments with bright white décor and tiled floors. They come with a kitchen and balcony; the best have wonderful views south over the bay. The complex has a market and children's play area.

Eating

There is no shortage of cheap and cheerful eateries, including Chinese, Indian, fast food and more all over town.

Miramar (☎ 971 545293; Passeig Marítim 2; meals €25-35; 🍴 Feb-Dec) Take up a spot on the ample terrace of this waterfront classic (since 1871) for one of a broad selection of paellas or *fideuà* (roughly a vermicelli noodle version of paella, €11 to €13). Standard fish dishes (sole, bream etc for around €16) are well prepared.

Bogavante (☎ 971 547364; Carrer de Teodoro Canet 2; meals €40-45; 🍴 Tue-Sun mid-Nov-Dec) This place has more stylish pretensions and occasionally has contemporary art on the walls. Timber floors, halogen lighting and a huge tank full of sea critters awaiting their fate are the interior's hallmarks. Opt for classics such as sole meunière or dig deeper into your pocket for fresh catch of the day (sold by weight).

our pick La Terraza (☎ 971 545611; www.culinariaalcanada.com; Placeta de Pompeu Fabra 7, Alcanada; meals €45-50; 🍴 Easter-Oct) The setting's the thing. Ignore that the building looks like a pink, seashell-covered watchtower and proceed to the seaside terrace for a pre-dinner drink. You can have a set meal for €40 here or proceed to the restaurant proper. They have an extensive menu, especially of creatures from the deep. The *caldereta de pescado y marisco* (€26) is a hearty fish and shellfish hotpot.

Restaurante Jardín (☎ 971 892391; www.restaurantejardin.com; Carrer dels Tritons s/n; meals €45-55; 🍴 Tue-Sun Jun-Sep, Fri-Sun & holidays Oct-Dec, mid-Mar-May) is a garden of culinary delights. The cooking brings *nouvelle* twists to essential Med products, with such offerings as *delicias de Ibérico con gambas* (variety of Spanish cured ham slices with prawns) followed by various fishy options or a succulent *solomillo de buey a la mostaza dulce* (beef sirloin in sweet mustard).

Entertainment

A family resort, Port d'Alcúdia is jammed with UK-style pubs and the like around the old port. A couple of clubs, **Magic Discoteca** (Avinguda del Tucà 1; 🍴 10.30pm-6am May-Oct) and **Menta** (www.mentadisco.net; Avinguda del Tucà 5; 🍴 7.30pm-6am), keep the gyrating night owls happy until dawn.

Getting There & Away

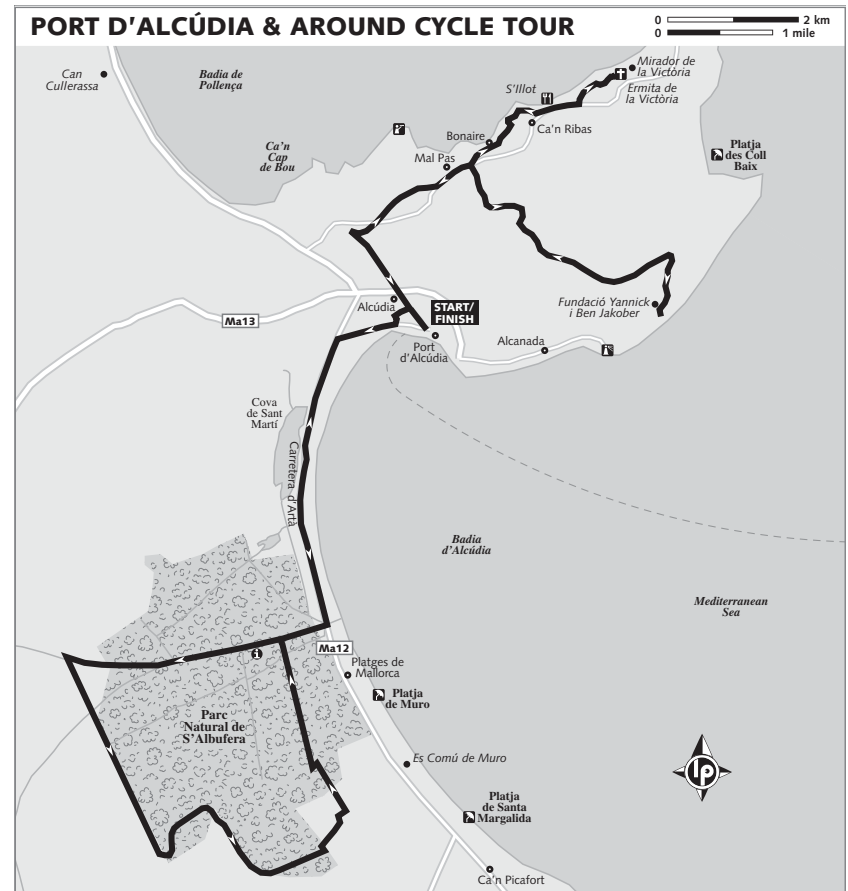
See Alcúdia (p144) for bus information.

You'll find eight car-rental outlets in Port d'Alcúdia. Boats leave for Ciutadella on the island of Menorca (see p209) from the ferry port.

CYCLE TOUR: PORT D'ALCÚDIA & AROUND

This ride is a pleasant dawdle through tranquil wetlands, followed by an old town turn and a real rollercoaster ride around the bay. It's best spread over a full day with frequent stops to take in the surroundings.

Setting out from Port d'Alcúdia's Passeig Marítim, head south towards C'an Picafor,



RIDE FACTS

Start/finish Port d'Alcúdia

Distance 32km (41km including detour)

Difficulty easy to moderate

Bike hybrid or mountain bike

signed left at the first roundabout you come to. Carretera d'Artà stretches rather uneventfully from here for 4.5km, before passing over a canal, at which point you should take an immediate right. A pitted road leads up to the **Parc Natural de S'Albufera's** information centre (see p148). From here, route 3 is the best option for cyclists, skirting the wetlands' edge and allowing leisurely pedalling. Despite the

potholes, the peaceful surroundings and accompanying avian chorus makes this a lovely ride, and there's plenty to keep a keen twitcher occupied.

Retrace your tracks to Port d'Alcúdia but follow the road (Carrer del Coral) round to the left instead of carrying along to the seafront. Continue until you hit a main road and take a left towards Alcúdia. After 2km you'll arrive at the **Plaça de Carles V** and one of the town's sets of turreted gates. Take a while to wander through the charming old town (see p142), or simply stock up on water or picnic fare.

From Plaça de Carles V head down the road leading to Carrer de la Creu (signed) and take the next available right. At the main road, turn

left. After 2km you'll come to a small junction with Fundació signed to the right; continue straight on.

Here, the road begins to undulate as it passes through upmarket **Mal Pas** and **Bonaire** where yachts bob calmly in the harbour, before climbing higher around the bay. You can pause at the beautifully sited but casual **Bar-Restaurante S'Illot** (☎ 971 546320; Camí vell de la Victòria s/n; mains €8.50-16.50, tapes €7-10; ☎ 11am-11pm), with a terrace overlooking the bay. It serves fish and tapas, as well as ice creams, and there's a great spot to picnic just next door.

If you've still got some energy left, follow the signs to the **Mirador de la Victòria**, the mountains rising to your right and a stunning view of the Badia de Pollença to your left.

You can take a well-earned break at the **Ermita de la Victòria**, where there's a snack bar and lodgings (see below). Once you've got your breath back, breeze all the way back down to Alcúdia or, if it's a Tuesday, consider a detour to the fascinating **Fundació Yannick i Ben Jakober** (p143), a left turn when you return to the junction at the Bodega del Sol restaurant. Otherwise follow the signs back to Port d'Alcúdia.

You can rent bikes at many of the car-hire places along Carretera d'Artà. At **Carpay** (☎ 971 891779; Avinguda de Pere Mas Reus 2) you pay €6 to €10 per day depending on bike type and number of days.

CAP DES PINAR

From Alcúdia and Port d'Alcúdia, a great chunk of land juts eastward into the deep blue, bristling with Aleppo pine woods at its eastern end as it rises to a series of precipitous cliffs. From Alcúdia go northeast through residential Mal Pas and Bonaire to a scenic route that stretches to Cap des Pinar. Unfortunately, the cape is military land and off limits but the rest is well worth it. After 1.5km of winding coast road east of Bonaire you reach the beach and bar-restaurant of S'Illot. Overlooking it all is the horrible hulk of the **Albergue la Victòria** (☎ 971 545395; dm/full board €14.50/26.50; ☎ Mar-Nov), basic but good value if you don't mind bunking down in dorms.

our pick **Ermita de la Victòria** (☎ 971 549912; www.javictoriahotel.com; Carretera Cap des Pinar; s/d €45/66) About 600m east of S'Illot, a side road winds up high to a magnificent viewpoint and this early 15th-century hermitage. The 12 renovated rooms have a crisp feel, all white walls and cream linen with timber window shutters and beams.

The massive stone walls and terracotta floors lend it Mediterranean grace and the position is perfect. The nearby **restaurant** (☎ 971 547173; ☎ Tue-Sun) is great for a simple paella while gazing out over the bay below. From here, it's about a 40-minute uphill walk to **Sa Talaia**, a 16th-century lookout tower with views to the north, east and south. Back on the main road, walk about 1.5km east from the junction to where the road is blocked. It's worth the trip to continue savouring the changing views.

Another option on this peninsula is to head for the **Platja des Coll Baix**. From Alcúdia it's about 8km to an open spot in the woods where you can leave your car or bike. Follow the directions for the Fundació Yannick i Ben Jakober (p143) and keep on for another 2km. From this spot, you could climb the south trail to Sa Talaia. Then follow the signs to Coll Baix, a fairly easy half-hour descent. The main trail will lead you to the rocks south of the beach, from where you have to scramble back it. A small flotilla of sailboats and the occasional tour boat can populate the bay, so early morning (sunrise!) is the best time to visit this lovely grey pebbly-sandy affair lapped by translucent waters.

PARC NATURAL DE S'ALBUFERA

As the southward sprawl of Port d'Alcúdia peters out into a shady seaside strip of hotels, apartments, supermarkets and eateries, the inland side of the Ma12 reveals a haven of natural beauty. The 688-hectare **Parc Natural de S'Albufera** (Map p134; ☎ 9am-7pm Apr-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-Mar) is home to a bustling selection of bird life. A much greater area of wetland emerged more than 100,000 years ago. In the 19th century especially, attempts were made (with differing degrees of success) to dry out the mix of salt and fresh water to create cultivable land and combat malaria. The so-called Gran Canal at the heart of the park was designed to channel the water out to sea. The five-arched **Pont de Sa Roca** bridge was built over it in the late 19th century to ease travel between Santa Margalida and Alcúdia. Many of the *marjales* (parcels of arable land won from the wetlands) date to the same period.

The island government bought some of the land in 1985 and the park was born. Its name derives from an old Arab toponym, Albuhayra (lagoon). Around 400 plant species and 230 bird species (80% of the types of bird known in the Balearic Islands), some of them

permanent residents and others migratory, have been catalogued here.

The **Centro de Recepció de Sa Roca** (☎ 971 892250; ☎ 9am-4pm) is about 1km from the park entrance and can provide information on the park and its bird life. From here, you can walk or cycle about 12km of trails (there are four signposted paths). Some *aguaites* (timber bird-watching observatories – come inside and watch in silence) are better than others. You'll see lots of wading birds in action from the Bishop I and II *aguaites* on the north side of the Gran Canal. Holders of the Targeta Verda (p16) can use park bicycles and binoculars for free.

Facing the sea across from the park entrance is **Platja de Muro**, which stretches north to Port d'Alcúdia and south to Ca'n Picafort. A 3km stretch of it is backed by **Es Comú de Muro**, a thick tangle of Aleppo pines and other dune flora that gives the beach a wilder feel and is part of the Parc Natural.

Buses between Ca'n Picafort and Alcúdia stop by a small car park near the park entrance.

SOUTH OF ALCÚDIA

CA'N PICAFORT & AROUND

A smaller version of Port d'Alcúdia, Ca'n Picafort (7km further southeast around the bay) and its southern extension, **Son Bauló**, is a package-tour frontier town, somewhat raw and raggedy. But the beaches are pretty good and there are some interesting archaeological sites. There has been a settlement of some sort here since at least 1860.

Information

The **tourist office** (☎ 971 850310; Plaça de Gabriel Roca; ☎ 9am-1pm & 5-7.30pm Mon-Fri Easter-Oct) is at the south end of Ca'n Picafort.

Sights & Activities

The bulk of the town is an uninspiring grid of streets backing on to **Platja de Santa Margalida**, a crowded shallow beach with turquoise water. The promenade behind it is jammed with eateries offering everything from chip butties to Jaegerschnitzel.

The best beach options lie beyond the centre. To the northwest (walk along the beach from the heart of Ca'n Picafort) the beach of **Ses Casetes dels Capellans** (signposted off the Ma12 at the roundabout where you enter Ca'n Picafort

from the north) is broad and backed by several beach restaurants and bars that exude a relaxed feel. Keep walking north about 1km and you are on the beach of Es Comú de Muro (left).

To the southwest, where the Son Bauló hotel and apartment belt ends, is **La Platja de Son Bauló** and, beyond the trickle of water from the Torrent de Son Bauló, the wilder **Platja de Son Real**. The latter is not kept as clean as the former, but it is worth walking along here for several reasons. This almost 5km stretch of coast, with snippets of sandy strands in among the rock points, is backed only by low dunes, scrub and bushland dense with Aleppo pines. Much of this area between the coast and the Ma12 highway, once private farmland, has been converted into the **Finca Pública de Son Real** (admission free; ☎ 10am-7pm Apr-Sep, 10am-5pm Oct-Mar). Its main entrance is just south of the Km18 milestone on the Ma12, and the ramshackle buildings of a once proud *possessió* (now being renovated) host an information office for those who wish to walk the property's several trails. From the seaside, you can cross the fence at various points.

From the *possessió*, one trail leads through a largely abandoned fig plantation to the overgrown Talayotic ruins of **Es Figueral de Son Real**. This settlement dates at least to 1000 BC and consists of several buildings.

Greater visual impact comes from the **Necròpolis de Son Real**, on the sea about 10 minutes' walk southeast of Platja de Son Bauló. It appears to have been a Talayotic cemetery with 110 tombs (in which the remains of more than 300 people were found). The tombs have the shape of mini-*talayots* and date as far back as the 7th century BC. Some suggest this was a commoners' graveyard. Please don't walk on the tombs.

A few hundred metres further southeast, the **Illot dels Porros** also contains remains of an ancient necropolis. It's a fairly easy swim for the moderately fit.

Virtually in front of the islet is one of two obelisk-shaped aiming towers. Its twin is further up the hill within the Finca Pública de Son Real (for more on these see the boxed text, p150).

Sleeping & Eating

The waterfront of Ca'n Picafort is lined with ageing apartments and 1970s hotel blocks whose façades could often do with a lick of paint. They are much of a muchness and mostly work with package tour agencies.

Hostal El Cel (☎ 971 851394; hotelcel@gmail.com; Passeig de Colom 79; d €45) A handy cheapie on the corner of Carrer de les Illes Canaries and one block back from the beach. The rooms are done in basic off-white and are bereft of all but the essentials. Most have balconies though and this place often has something going at short notice.

Casal Santa Eulàlia (☎ 971 852732; www.casal-san-taeulalia.com; Carretera de Santa Margalida-Alcúdia Km6; s/d €195/220; ☎ dinner Mar-Oct; P ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎) If being 2km inland from Ca'n Picafort (take the Ma3140) doesn't bother you, this rural retreat is just what the doctor ordered. The huddle of stone houses dates to 1242 and has been renovated with classic rural taste. A Jacuzzi bubbles below ground in the former grain silo. The restaurant has a fine reputation. They sometimes set up a barbecue by one of the pools.

Bar Sa Ximada (☎ 971 852310; Carretera d'Alcúdia 29; menú del dia €8, meals €20-25; ☎ Mon-Sat) This workaday bar restaurant specialises in meat (around €11 to €14 for big slabs) grilled on hot stones. The midday set meal is filling and simple, served with a 1.5L bottle of *tinto de verano* (red wine mixed with lemonade). It's on the way out of town towards Port d'Alcúdia.

The waterfront and Avinguda de Josep Trias are lined with eateries, bars and pubs (all largely indistinguishable from one another). If you don't feel like watching *Coronation Street* while scoffing Yorkshire pudding you'll have

to head to the Ma12, where several locals' places are scattered.

Drinking & Entertainment

The bulk of the pubs and bars, and a couple of *discotecas* for revelling until dawn, are bunched together on and around Avinguda de Josep Trias.

Getting There & Away BUS

Bus 390 runs from Palma to Ca'n Picafort (€4.55, one hour 10 minutes, seven Monday to Saturday, four Sunday and holidays) via Llubí and Santa Margalida and on to Son Serra.

The 352 bus is the main service between Ca'n Picafort and Port de Pollença (€2.20, one hour), via Port d'Alcúdia and Alcúdia. It runs as often as every 15 minutes in summer, but drops to 11 runs from November to April.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Ca'n Picafort is on the Ma12 at about the half-way point along the Badia d'Alcúdia. From Palma, take the Ma13 motorway to Inca, turn off for Muro and then Ca'n Picafort.

SON SERRA DE MARINA

This sprawling holiday residential development spreads 5km east along the coast from Son Bauló. Mallorquins and Germans alike flock to its southeast edge, for here starts the dune-backed **Platja de Sa Canova** (aka S'Arenal or Platja de Son Serra), a 2km stretch of virgin beach. Archaeology fans may notice the square-based **Talayot de Son Serra** at the entrance to the town from the Ma12 highway.

Where the beach meets the settlement is where most people gather, among them wind and kite-surfing enthusiasts. Most wander into the **El Sol Sunshine Bar** (☎ 971 854029; Carrer de Joan Frontera; ☎ daily; ☎) at some point for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a cocktail. With its wicker chairs, internet point and laid-back feeling, it generates an almost Malibu vibe (only the accents are more like Munich). Friday is pizza day and Sunday's for brunch (10am to 3pm). Inquire about the **Apartamentos 2 Playas** (☎ 630 017858; www.lavila.org/playamonte; ☎) upstairs. There are six, which can take up to four people each. Prices vary depending on number of people, days and season. In August, two people would pay €160 for two days.

Some buses on the Palma-Ca'n Picafort run continue to here.

GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL

Northeast along the coastal Ma3331, 3km from Colònia de Sant Pere and past a couple of often Poseidon grass-covered beaches, is the somnolent holiday settlement of **Betlem**. Not much goes on here, although you'll find two snoozy restaurants. Betlem is the beginning point for some pleasant striding. Along the coast, a 3km 4WD trail hugs the Aleppo pine-fringed shoreline till it reaches a tiny protected bay called **Es Caló**, where a couple of sailboats occasionally find shelter and a handful of people stretch out on the stony strand and swim in the emerald waters. Behind you, dramatic limestone hills rise sharply, some barely clothed in swaying grass. The brown earth of the coast is fragile and the bent trees are testimony to the prevailing windy clime. **Cap Ferrutx**, the windy cape north of Es Caló, is a tougher nut to crack as there are no trails.

Another trail climbs south from the southern entry to Betlem into the hills to reach the 19th-century **Ermita de Betlem** (after about 50 minutes' exertion). Hermits still live a silent life of self-sufficiency and contemplation in this sublime spot. Those not of a mind to walk can approach by car from Artà (see p167). The narrow, snake-like Ma3333 meanders for about 5km through woodland and fields before taking off to reach the top of the ridge at around 7km. The views down over the sea are breathtaking from this crest. The road then drops 2km to the hermitage, which lies at the western edge of the **Parc Natural de la Península de Llevant** (p169). Those who have walked up from Betlem can continue east over the ridge deeper into the park. It takes about 1½ hours from Betlem to **S'Alquera Vella d'Avall**, from where other trails splinter out across the park.

COLÒNIA DE SANT PERE

Named after the patron saint of fishers (St Peter), this peaceful spot was actually founded in 1881 as an agricultural settlement. Little farming goes on nowadays and the huddle of houses has expanded beyond the central square and church to accommodate a small populace that seems to be on permanent vacation. In the centre of town on the shady Passeig del Mar, some splash about in the water on the sandy, protected **Platja de la Colònia de Sant Pere**. Nearby is the small marina and fishing port. About 2.5km west, after the residential area of **S'Estanyol** (aka S'Estany des Bisbe), **Platja de Sa Canova** (see opposite) starts. From S'Estanyol the only way to Sa Canova is on foot.

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Rocamar (☎ 971 828503; www.hotelrocamar.net; Carrer de Sant Mateu 9; s/d €80/117; ☎ ☎ ☎) This renovated hotel is a breath from the central square and beach. Creams, beiges and browns dominate the décor and the spacious, light rooms have parquet floors and pleasantly neutral, white furniture. From the roof terrace,

where you can plonk into the Jacuzzi, you can see the deep blue sea.

Sa Xarxa (☎ 971 589251; Passeig del Mar s/n; meals €30-45; ☎ Tue-Sun mid-Feb-mid-Jan) They'll do all sorts of things for you at 'the Net', including Atlantic sole and an array of meat options, but the reason to come is for the catch of the day done simply in a salty crust. This shady, German-owned spot is the last in line as you head east along the waterfront. Everything, from the mozzarella and tomato salad with the fabulous pesto, to the carpaccio with a hint of truffle oil, is done with a delicate touch.

Getting There & Away BUS

The 481 bus (a taxi bus for a maximum of four people) runs between Artà and Colònia de Sant Pere (€1.80, 30 minutes, up to six times a day). You must call ☎ 650 233957 by 7pm the day before to book the service.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Off the Ma12 road between Artà and Port d'Alcúdia, 7km west of Artà, a side road proceeds 4km north to Colònia de Sant Pere.

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TAKING AIM

From just south of Port d'Alcúdia to Colònia de Sant Pere, you will see obelisks on or near the waterfront. No, the ancient Egyptians weren't here. As WWII raged around the Mediterranean after the Spanish Civil War, the Spanish navy decided to set up a series of *torres de enfilación* (aiming towers) for submarines operating in this strategic bay. They were built in pairs around the bay and allowed sub commanders to get more precise firing bearings, using the then red-painted tips of these obelisks (those in Ca'n Picafort have been restored, painted in bright white with their blood-red tips). Each obelisk was built 200m from its twin, and each pair at a distance of 1240m from the next.