

*Rüdiger Liedtke*

111 Places  
in Mallorca  
That You  
Shouldn't Miss

111

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# Foreword

Did you know that you can scale a roof of God in Palma, that an unusual donkey awaits you in the Tramuntana mountain range, that an eldorado for cyclists beckons in Alaró and an encounter with Rafa Nadal is in store in Manacor? That there are piano evenings without pianists in S'Alqueria Blanca, that Can Picafort is a stronghold for graffiti, that you can trace the lives of well-to-do gentlemen from past centuries in Palma or experience Mallorca from its wildest side on Cap Blanc? Do you know the cross of Mallorca? And the most mysterious monastery on the island? With around 200 monasteries and hermitages, Mallorca has the highest concentration of spiritual places in the whole of Europe, and in Palma a nativity scene with more than a thousand figures is surely one of Europe's largest.

Mallorca is much more than sun, sea and partying. The island is incredibly diverse. There is mass tourism *and* exclusive five-star hotels, pedalos *and* luxury yachts, beach tennis *and* eighteen-hole golf courses. Mallorca has been shaped by a turbulent history and a cultural diversity the like of which you would be hard pushed to find anywhere else. On top of all this, there's the unique landscape and one of Europe's most attractive metropolises, Palma. Anyone who has properly understood what Mallorca has to offer, will never again speak disparagingly of it simply being a 'party island'.

This is a new edition of *111 Places in Mallorca That You Shouldn't Miss*. The book has been completely reworked and updated. There are dozens of new and exciting places that will leave you awestruck, and some real journeys of discovery. Once again, even Mallorca aficionados will be taken to places that will surprise them, far from all the hustle and bustle of tourism. And not just once, but 111 times over.



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## 19 The Rock Arch

*An object of art created by nature*

Most Mallorca holidaymakers think they know the rock arch near the fine sand of Cala Santanyí. This is because they have seen it so often on photos that they've begun to believe that they've actually witnessed it in reality. A self-deception – the gigantic rock gateway off the cliffs near Cala Santanyí is not easy to find and hard to reach. You really have to be looking for this unique place, on the steep slope, in strong winds. You can also reach it along the cliffs beyond the Bay of Cala Santanyí, sheltered from the wind by the surrounding high rocks and planted with pines, towards the picturesque Cala Llombards.

The rock 'Es Pontas' is a natural wonder that will take your breath away when you come face to face with it. The stone gateway, that rises up out of the sea, can never be conveyed so powerfully in a photo. A massive rock formation towers up from the blue water into a huge bridge, free standing and ending in the sea on both sides. This rock has been flushed out by the water over millions of years. Many also call Es Pontas 'Mallorca's gate to the sea'. It goes without saying that this spectacular natural wonder is especially popular among divers and extreme climbers.

There are numerous extreme rock formations, spectacular crevices and rock holes on the island, that are like natural works of art. In Cala de Sa Comuna you can, for example, jump into the sea through a hole in the rock. Right in front of the rock bridge Es Pontas one encounters a piece of art that is from a more recent period, but which seems no less archaic. The artist Rolf Schaffner piled up nine massive blocks of rock into a six-metre-high object, whose counterparts, according to the artist, are to be found in cruciform, starting from Cologne in Germany, to Trondheim in Norway, Volgograd in Russia and Cork in Ireland. The name of the object ensemble: *Equilibrio* (equilibrium).



**Address** 07650 Cala Santanyí | **Getting there** From Santanyí on the Ma-6102, right just before Cala Santanyí up towards Hotel Pinos Playa and park, walk to the cliffs and lookout point | **Tip** A similar natural wonder is the rocky headland Na Foradada with an 18-metre hole in the rock wall (Mirador de na Foradada, Ma-10 from Valldemossa to Deia at kilometre 65).

## 25 — The Battlements

*The splendid castle protects a saint and vice versa*

You should definitely scale Mallorca's largest fortress by foot. The steep stairs, with 150 steps, lead up from the centre of the town. What awaits you there, high above the roofs of Capdepera, is certainly worth the climb. A restored fortress, where the townspeople once found refuge from advancing pirates, and another view, to be enjoyed preferably in the evening towards sunset.

The mountain has always attracted people. The Romans settled up here to control the plains. The Moors expanded the complex further, building the Miquel Nunis tower, which is still standing today but converted in the meantime into a mill, between the 10th and 12th century. After the Moors had long been conquered in Palma, they were still stubbornly resisting the troops of James I of Aragón and the Reconquista in Capdepera in 1230. James II had the fortress expanded in around 1300, and the local population lived within the walls in small houses to protect themselves from pirate attacks. Castell de Capdepera was thought for a long time to be impregnable, and kept its function as a fortified village up until the 18th century. With the enlargement of the town and a new city wall built lower down, the fort lost its function and became derelict. The restoration only began in 1983.

Within the accessible castle walls, completely equipped with battlements, you can still see the Arabic tower, the house of the governor, which now contains a museum about the art of palm leaf weaving cultivated in Capdepera, and the late-Gothic chapel of Nuestra Senyora de la Esperança from the 14th century. 'Our Lady of Hope', venerated to this day, is supposed to have protected Capdepera time and again from pirate attacks. It is believed that when she was placed on the battlements, thick fog drew in, which made the pirates retreat. The delicate Madonna is the patron saint of Capdepera to this day.



**Address** Carrer Castell de Capdepera, 07580 Capdepera, +34 (0)971 818746 | **Getting there** From Palma on the Ma-15 via Manacor and Artà | **Hours** 16 Mar–14 Oct daily 9am–8pm, 15 Oct–15 Mar daily 9am–5pm | **Tip** Those who are courageous and do not shy away from taking the more difficult path, can set off on another tour through the magnificent landscape of the Parc Natural Peninsula del Llevant armed with a good map.

## 33 The Donkey

*Unusual art in Tramuntana*

There is something poignant about standing in front of the metal donkey by the artist Mariano Navares in Estellencs and at the same time hearing the sound of several donkeys and mules calling or braying coming up from the valley and down from the mountains. The extraordinary sculpture at the entrance to the 350-resident village Estellencs is called *Mulus Ferreus*, and stopping to look at it is *de rigueur* for every visitor. It is a homage to the animal that is still ubiquitous here, and was the only form of transport in this remote area for hundreds of years, connecting the small community with the outside world.

Estellencs is a tiny, sleepy village, which can only be reached on the winding, spectacular coastal road Ma-10 from Andratx or Valldemossa, far from mass tourism, high over the nearby coast and below the 1,000-metre-tall Puig de Galatzó. When cars snake through the narrow streets of the village in summer, many can barely stop, because the number of parking spaces is very limited. That is, of course, completely different in winter.

Mariano Navares, born in Miranda de Ebro in the Burgos province in 1959, who trained as a blacksmith and later studied interior design in Madrid, has lived as an artist on Mallorca from 1995 and settled in Estellencs over 20 years ago, fascinated by the Mediterranean light and the special location of the village. Navares works in an unusual studio in the middle of the village, opposite the town hall and next to the church, in an old, partially empty church building that was planned but never completed. He transformed it into his workshop and creates his art here with welding machines, files and hacksaws. Old engine blocks, crankshafts, shock absorbers, body parts and screws, combined with stainless steel and bronze elements, are composed into fantasy objects, but in many cases they are also figurative and representational.



**Address** Plaza Nueva, 07192 Estellencs, +34 (0)619 487066 (studio of the artist Mariano Navares) | **Getting there** On the Ma-10 from Valldemossa via Banyalbufar or coming from Andratx | **Hours** Donkey and sculpture in front of the studio always viewable, studio on request | **Tip** In front of the artist's studio stands his piece *Re Accion A* from 2005, a 3.6-metre-tall, slim figure made of recycled materials and scrap metal, partially coloured, as well as *El Viajero Perdido* with suitcases from 1999.