Menorca or Minorca is the most northerly of the Balearic Islands. It has all the charm of its better known neighbours but is a world away from the intense nightlife of Ibiza and the bustling and overdeveloped resorts of Mallorca.

**Escape the crowd**

Menorca has learned from her sister Islands and controlled holiday developments to ensure they are small scale and largely self-contained. This has resulted in most of the island remaining rural and tranquil with Prehistoric sites providing a reminders of an ancient Bronze Age civilisation.

**Deserted Beach**

**Cities**

The two Cities in Menorca are situated at the eastern and western extremities of the Island. In the west is Ciutadella, a City of great beauty and a long history. In the east extremity, 32km (20 miles) away, is Mahon, the capital where most visitors arrive by Sea or by Air. Both Cities are well worth visiting.

**Beaches**

The Island's most striking feature is its beaches. They provide a pathwork of golden sands, white coves and aquamarine waters, particularly in the south, that attract the young and not so young year after year.

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### Key Facts

**Location**

Menorca lies in the Mediterranean, 200km (120 miles) southeast of Barcelona.

**Time**

GMT + 1 (GMT + 2 from last Sunday in March to last Sunday in October).

**Area**

694 sq km.

**Population**

85,000 (2007).

**Population Density**

127 per sq km.

**Capital**


**Geography**

Menorca is largely flat and rural with its highest point, Monte Toro, at just 358m (1174ft).

Cliffs and a deep harbour mark the arrival of ships at Mahon. Elsewhere the island is largely surrounded by small sandy coves and golden beaches.
Ciutadella Cathedral

Spanish Embassy in the UK
39 Chesham Place, London SW1X 8SB, UK
Tel: (020) 7235 5555.
Website: www.maec.es

Spanish Consulate General in the UK
20 Draycott Place, London SW3 2RZ, UK
Tel: (020) 7589 8989 or 0906 550 8970 (recorded visa information; calls cost £1 per minute from BT lines).
Website: www.conspalon.org
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0930-1330 (visa information by appointment only).

Spanish National Tourist Office in the UK
Second floor, 79 New Cavendish Street, London W1W 6XB, UK
Tel: (020) 7317 2010.
Website: www.spain.info/uk

Embassy and Consulate of the Kingdom of Spain in the USA
2375 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20037
Tel: (202) 452 0100 or 728 2340/30 (consulate).
Website: www.maec.es

Spanish Tourist Office in the USA
Fifth Avenue, 35th Floor, New York, NY 10103, USA
Tel: (212) 265 8822.
Website: www.spain.info

Menorca Island Council
Cós de Gràcia 30, 07702 Maó
Tel: 902 929 015.
Website: www.illesbalears.es

Government
Parliamentary monarchy since 1978.

Head of State
King Juan Carlos I since 1975.

Head of Government
José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero since 2004.

Recent History
In March 2008, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's ruling Socialist Party was re-elected, winning 169 seats, just short of the 176 needed for an absolute parliamentary majority.
**Current Issues**

One of Spain's most serious domestic issues continues to be tension in the northern Basque region.

In March 2006, the Basque separatist organization ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna) announced a permanent ceasefire but despite a pledge to seek a political solution, relations with the government remain brittle.

Spain's claim to Gibraltar continues, while Morocco claims the Spanish North African enclaves of Melilla and Ceuta.

**Language**

The principal language is Castilian Spanish.

Menorcans also speak Catalan, a form of which is spoken in the Island and the local dialect is known as Menorquin or Menorquí.

Local place names are in both Spanish and Catalan (Catalá), thus Mahon is also called Maó.

English and German are widely spoken in all tourist destinations.

**Religion**

There is no official religion, but the majority of the population are Roman Catholic.

**Electricity**

220 or 225 volts AC, 50Hz. Generally, round two-pin plugs and screw-type lamp fittings are in use.

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**Social Conventions**

Spanish life has undergone rapid change in recent decades and many of the stricter religious customs are giving way to modern international pressures, especially in the cities and among women.

In spite of this, traditions remain strong; hospitality, chivalry and courtesy thrive.

Handshaking is the customary form of greeting between men whilst women, to whom one has already been introduced, may be greeted with a fleeting kiss on either cheek.

Normal social courtesies should be observed when visiting someone's home and a small gift is always appreciated.

Conservative casual wear is widely acceptable. Outside resorts, scanty beachwear should be confined to beach or poolside.

The evening meal is taken late, generally 2100-2200. A law banning smoking in offices, shops, schools, hospitals, cultural centres and on public transport was introduced on 1 January 2006.

Bars and restaurants must declare whether they permit or prohibit smoking. The vast majority have opted for the former.
Currency & Money

Euro (EUR; symbol €) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Currency Exchange

Money can be changed in any bank, and at most travel agencies, major hotels and airports.

Credit/Debit Cards and ATMs
American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted. ATMs are widely available.

Traveller's Cheques

International traveller's cheques are widely accepted. To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travellers are advised to take traveller's cheques in Euros or Pounds Sterling. Traveller's cheques should be changed at banks or exchange bureaux.

Banking Hours

Mon-Fri, generally 0830-1330.

Exchange Rate Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>£1.00=</th>
<th>€1.25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08Jul09</td>
<td>$1.00=</td>
<td>€0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Duty Free

The following goods may be imported into Menorca without incurring customs duty:

- 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos, 50 cigars or 250g tobacco (300 cigarettes, 150 cigarillos, 75 cigars and 400g of tobacco for EU nationals).
- 1l of spirits if exceeding 22% volume or 2l of alcoholic beverage not exceeding 22% volume plus 2l of other wine (1.5l exceeding 22% and 3l if up to 22% and 5l of wine for EU nationals).
- 250ml eau de toilette and 50g of perfume (375ml eau de toilette and 75g perfume for EU nationals).
- 500g of coffee or 200g of coffee extract (1000g of coffee and 4000g of coffee extract for EU nationals).
- 100g of tea or 40g of tea extract (200g tea or 80g tea extract for EU nationals).
- Gifts up to the value of approximately €37.26 (no limit for EU nationals).

Abolition of duty-free goods within the EU on 30 June 1999

The sale of duty-free alcohol and tobacco at airports and at sea was abolished in all of the original 15 EU member states. Of the 10 new member states that joined the EU on 1 May 2004 and the two states that joined on 1 January 2007, these rules already apply to Cyprus and Malta.

There are transitional rules in place for visitors returning to one of the original 15 EU countries from one of the other new EU countries. But for the original 15, plus Cyprus and Malta, there are no limits imposed on importing tobacco and alcohol products from one EU country to another. Travellers should note that they may be required to prove...
at customs that the goods purchased are for personal use only.

Member states may follow the EU's guide levels of: 10l of spirits; 20l of fortified wine; 90l of wine; 110l of beer; 800 cigarettes; 400 cigarillos; 200 cigars and 1kg of tobacco.

**Public Holidays**

Below are listed Public Holidays for the January 2008-December 2009 period.

![Image](image1.jpg)

**2009**

1 Jan New Year's Day.
6 Jan Epiphany.
1 Mar Balearics Day.
19 Mar San Jose.
9 Apr Maundy Thursday.
10 Apr Good Friday.
1 May Labour Day.
15 Aug Assumption.
12 Oct National Day.
1 Nov All Saints' Day.
6 Dec Constitution Day.
8 Dec Immaculate Conception.
25 Dec Christmas Day.
26 Dec Boxing Day.

**Health**

**Vaccinations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccine</th>
<th>Precautions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diphtheria</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis A</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetanus</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typhoid</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Fever</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inoculation regulations can change at short notice. Please take medical advice in the case of doubt. Where 'Sometimes' appears in the table above, precautions may be required, depending on the season and region visited.

**Health Care**

If suddenly taken ill or involved in an accident during a visit to Menorca, free or reduced-cost necessary treatment is available for European travellers - in most cases on production of a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) obtained in their country of origin. Comprehensive insurance is advised for all other nationals.

![Image](image2.jpg)

The Church of Santa Maria Mahon
Accommodation

Hotels

The majority of visitors stay in 3- and 4-star low-rise small-scale hotels. Hotels graded below this are rare, though there are a handful of 5-star hotels on the island.

Villas

An increasing number of holidaymakers are turning to renting villas, apartments and bungalows.

Most sizeable hotels and apartments in the resorts tend to be block-booked by package tour operators.

If you want to get away from the crowds you can stay in the country in agroturismo/turismo rural (rural tourism) accommodation. These are typically renovated older properties.

Camping & Caravaning

The only official campsite on Menorca is at Es Pinaret, near Ciutadella.

There is a smart (unofficial) site at Son Bou (www.campingsonbou.com) which also offers wooden chalets as well as canvas accommodation.

Youth Hostels

There is one official hostel on the island, in Ciutadella.

Spanish Youth Hostel Network (REAJ) Website: www.reaj.com

Other Accommodation

Associació Agroturisme Balear (Rural Tourism)
Website: www.agroturismo-balear.com

Going Out

Food and Drink

Many eating places in the coastal resorts serve up the type of international resort fare found throughout the Mediterranean and cater for holidaymakers' 'home-from-home' tastes (eg pizzas, burgers, bratwurst, full English breakfast etc). Elsewhere Spanish cuisine predominates, though island cooking, using olive oil, tomatoes and garlic with fresh meat, fish and vegetables has become more common in recent years.
Regional specialities:

• Queso de Mahón (fresh island cheese).

• Caldereta de Llagosta (lobster stew).

• Sobrasada (soft, red, chorizo-like sausage).

• Tumbet (baked dish of layered potato, courgette, aubergine and tomato sauce).

• Pa amb oli (literally, bread with oil), a snack often supplemented by cheese, jamón (cured ham), or chorizo.

Regional drinks:

• Gin, introduced by the British. Pomada (gin with cloudy lemon) is popular in summer.

• Calent (liqueur made from wine, cinnamon, aniseed and saffron).

• Palo and Herbes de Mallorca (aromatic herby liqueurs).

Legal drinking age: 18.

Tipping: around 10% in restaurants.

Nightlife

Compared to its neighbours Menorca is very quiet with nightlife usually hotel based. Mahón and Ciutadella do offer a limited choice of nightspots.

A unique night time visit one should Make for its location alone is the cliff-side nightclub Cova d'en Xoroi (www.covadenxoroi.com).

The evening begins with relaxing ambient music as the sun goes down, cranking up the beats as the night goes on.

Shopping

Locally produced goods include furniture, hand embroidered items, hand painted ceramics, carved olive wood panels, wrought ironwork, glassware, leather, handmade olive shoes, costume jewellery and artificial pearls from Mallorca.

The island’s most famous brand is Abarcas sandals which use recycled car tyres for the soles and eco-leather from Valencia for the top. The best shopping is to be found in Mahon and Ciutadella while the Saturday market at Ferreries is the best on the island.

Shopping hours: Traditional shopping hours are Monday to Saturday 0900-1300 and 1700-2000. Supermarkets and department stores are open 1000-2200. Tourist shops also open on Sundays.

Business


Main imports: Machinery and equipment, fuels, chemicals, semi-finished goods and food.
Main exports: Machinery, motor vehicles, food, pharmaceuticals and medicines.

Main trade partners: France, Germany, Italy, UK and Portugal.

Economy.

The island relies heavily on tourism with most of its visitors coming from the UK and Germany.

The majority of the population work in tourism. Ancillary businesses are construction, the buying and selling of homes, properties and established businesses such as restaurants, bars, hotels and shops.

Farmers account for much of what remains. Mahón and Ciutadella are the commercial hubs of the island.

Business Etiquette

Business people are generally expected to dress smartly. English is widely spoken in Palma and the resorts but less so elsewhere.

Some knowledge of the Spanish language and possibly Catalan/Menorquin, is always appreciated and sometimes essential.

Punctuality is important. Attitudes to such things as responding to e-mails, letters and phone calls can be surprisingly casual.

Office hours: Tend to vary considerably but base hours of 0900-1330 and 1700-1800 are fairly typical.

Conferences & Conventions

The nearest large-scale convention and conference facilities are on neighbouring island of Mallorca.

Business Contacts

Minorca Chamber of Comerce, Industry and Navigation
Miquel Veri, 3A
07700 Maó, Menorca
Tel: 971 363 194.
Website: www.camaramenorca.com

Top Things To Do

Cova d'en Xoroi
This beautiful cave complex (www.covadenxoroi.com) is carved into the cliffside high above Cala en Porter. Watch the sunset while sipping on a cocktail at Cova d'en Xoroi then spend the rest of the evening in its nightclub.

Beaches

Idyllic Caribbean-like white sand coves of Cala Mitjana, Cala Turqueta, Cala Macarella and Cala Trébaluger are all within walking distance of Cala Galdana or take a boat from here or Cala n'Bosch. Arrive early in high season.

Diving

Menorca is nicknamed the Caribbean of the Mediterranean for its excellent diving conditions. All the dive operators offer "try dives" which will give you a good flavour of what's below.

Mahón Harbour

Take a boat trip around the fjord-like harbour of Mahón. It is one of the largest natural harbours in the world and gives spectacular views of the town rising up like a fortress perched on the clifftop.
**Xoriguer Distillery**

Tantalise your tastebuds at the Xoriguer Distillery at Mahón harbour. It is most famous for its Gin, introduced by the British (who ruled the island from 1708-1802), and also for producing a range of teeth-melting liqueurs.

**Cami de Cavalls**

Only recently reopened in its entirety, the Cami de Cavalls ('path of horses’) encircles the whole island, taking in spectacular views of Menorca’s coast and countryside. You can walk it or travel by horse as they did in medieval times. Parts of the path date back to the 14th century.

**Top Things To See**

**Naveta dels Tudons**

This extraordinary burial chamber, near Ciutadella, resembles an upturned boat and is unique to the region. It is considered to be Europe's oldest intact construction, dated around 1,500 B.C.

**Torralba d'en Salord**

This is one of the most impressive remnants of the island's Talayotic (Bronze Age) period.

Its monumental taula (T-shaped) stone formations are spectacular.

Other prehistoric formations worth a detour to are Talatí de Dalt and Cala Morell.

**Ciutadella**

The finest town on the island is a delight for wandering. Don't miss its superb gothic-baroque Catedral de Menorca, its picturesque arcaded shopping street, particularly Ses Voltes, and the quaint old market area.

**Binibèquer Vell**

You won't believe that this picture-postcard "typical fishermen’s village”, close to Mahon, is actually a holiday apartment complex built in 1972. It forms part of a small village where you can get a bite and a drink.
Mahón

The capital is a patchwork of architectural styles that shows its most attractive face from the harbour. Much of the old centre is pedestrianised and offers a wealth of attractive boutiques, cafes and restaurants.

Mahon Harbour

Getting There

Getting There by Air

There are regular international flights to Menorca from all over Europe. You can fly to Menorca, on a Friday, the whole year round from London Luton with Monarch.

Air Europa (www.air-europa.com) and Spanair (www.spanair.com) fly between the islands and mainland Spain.

Approximate Flight Times

From London to Mahón is around 2 hours 15 minutes.

Main Airports

Mahón (MAH) (www.aena.es) is 4.5km (2.8 miles) southwest of Mahón.

Airport Transport

Buses run directly to the town. Taxis are available.

Facilities: Duty-free shop, bank. Departure Tax None.

Getting There by Water

Main ports: Mahón and Ciutadella.

Balearia Eurolines Maritimes (www.balearia.net) operate car ferries and fast ferries from Mahón and Ciutadella to Barcelona and from Ciutadella to Alcúdia on Mallorca.

Acciona Trasmediterránea (www.trasmediterranea.es) operate car ferries between Mahón and Palma de Mallorca. Iscomar (www.iscomar.com) operate vehicle ferries between Palma and Mahón, and between Alcúdia and Ciutadella (Menorca).

Getting Around

Bus: Regular bus services link Mahón and Ciutadella to most main towns and resorts on the island.

Car hire

This is the most popular means of getting around and is available from the airport, in Mahón, Ciutadella and in all the resorts. Major international and (often cheaper) local firms operate. The quality of island roads is generally good.

Scooter & Motor Bikes

These are generally available for hire but check that this does not invalidate
your holiday insurance. Cycles may be useful for getting around the resorts.

**Regulations**: Traffic drives on the right. Seatbelts are compulsory.

**Emergency breakdown service**: Ayuda General del Automóvil (AGA) (tel: (902) 232 423).

**Documentation**: You will need your national driving licence and a credit card.

**Communications**

**Telephone**
Country code: 34. Emergency calls: 112. Area codes are incorporated within a nine digit number.

**Mobile Telephone**
Roaming agreements exist with most international mobile phone companies.

Coverage is good throughout most of the country.

**Internet**
There are Internet cafes in Mahón, Ciutadella and the larger resorts.

**Post**
There are efficient internal and international postal services (correos) to all countries. Airmail within Europe usually takes around five days. Post Office opening hours are usually Monday to Friday 8am to noon and 5pm to 7.30pm.

**Media**
Broadcasting in Spain has witnessed a spectacular expansion in recent years with the emergence of new commercial operators and the launch of digital services.

**Press**
- Diari de Balears is a Catalan-language newspaper based in Palma de Mallorca.
- Diario de Mallorca is the main Spanish-language daily newspaper.
- Majorca Daily Bulletin is Spain's oldest English-language daily newspaper.

**TV**
- La Radiotelevisió de les Illes Balears is the principal local broadcaster.
- There are dozens of foreign-language satellite channels.

**Radio**
- There are several radio stations in Spanish and English throughout the islands.

**Climate**
The island enjoys a temperate, Mediterranean climate.

Maximum temperatures in high summer are not excessive due to the cooling influence of the sea.

The winter is generally mild and dry, with occasional showers.

The pre and post high seasons (April-May and September-October) are usually perfect for avoiding crowds whilst still enjoying good weather conditions.

**Required Clothing**
Light or medium weights plus lightweight rainwear for the occasional thunderstorm or light shower.