

## Palma, Mallorca: A Disney Cruise Line Port Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

This summer, the Disney Magic returns to Europe to cruise the waters of the Mediterranean.

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We're in a fortunate enough position to have spent long weekends, visiting two of the Magic's ports of call.

In a future article, I'll be looking at Naples, home to a variety of shore excursions, with places such as Pompeii, Sorrento, the Amalfi Coast and Herculaneum, but first we start with Palma. It's the capital city of Mallorca, an island off the eastern Spanish coast, and it's the largest of the Balearic Islands, which also include Menorca, and Ibiza. Despite being an island, it's still easy enough to get around. It's about 60 miles long, and about 40 miles wide. Here, I'll take you through some of the Disney shore excursions, based on the parts of the island we visited during our stay.

□ The main attraction here is the place that the Magic docks, Palma, and that's where many holidaymakers, including ourselves, base themselves. Many shore excursions focus on the city, a number of them offering either a half or full day with a private vehicle and driver. These are not cheap options, although big groups may find the \$859 for a mini bus, driver and guide for four hours, taking up to 15 people a bargain. If you can fill the mini bus, it works out to just \$58/person.

□ The Palma city tour, Palma Highlights and Palma Highlights -- adults only (\$55/adults, and \$32/children) are the ones to go for if you just want a quick introduction to the city, and to see the major tourist attractions. Bellver Castle, high above the city, offers stunning views of Palma, and is a fascinating place to visit. Circular in shape, its inner courtyard is surrounded by two-tier arcades, and we absolutely loved the design of the place.

The tours also take you to see the stand-out attraction for Palma, Le Seu, otherwise known as the city's cathedral. Trust me, I'm someone who adores cathedrals and churches, and this is way above most of the others I've visited in my life. The stained glass rose windows inside are well worth seeing, but the structure is just as stunning from outside, particularly on a sunny day.

□ Another more active option is the Bike Ride through Palma de Mallorca (\$79/ages 12 and up), which does give you the chance to cycle

along the city's seafront. While I'm not that active, I have to confess the harbour area is beautiful, and well worth seeing, so if you are a more keen cyclist than me, it could be a good choice. You stop at the Park de la Mer, which offers absolutely stunning views of the cathedral and the Palau de l'Almudaina, the former royal residence, next door. It really is one of the most beautiful sights I've seen anywhere on our travels around the world.

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□If you want to see some of Palma and also venture further afield, Scenic Palma and Valldemossa (\$39/adults, and \$25/children) gives you the opportunity. Having said that, the views of Palma are from a vehicle, with a stop at Bellver Castle to admire the views from there, so if you want to explore the city more thoroughly, one of the previous tours would suit you better.

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□Valldemossa is set in the hills along the northwestern coast of the island, and is a beautiful village to visit, although it will take some time to go there, as the roads are narrow and winding at points. You'll enjoy a guided walking tour of Valldemossa, and we took our time wandering around the place, which was wonderfully deserted during our January stop there. It's certainly a chance to step into a more traditional Spanish village. Valldemossa (\$45/adults, and \$29/children) adds in free time there and a visit to the monastery where Frederic Chopin spent a winter composing some of his famous masterpieces.

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□As well as the tours I've highlighted, there are a couple of places we desperately did want to visit, but didn't get a chance. One is the Soller Train Ride (\$70/adults, and \$55/children), which takes you on a drive to Soller, before returning to Palma on a vintage train that runs between the two destinations. I'd heard rave reviews from friends about this, but sadly it wasn't operating during our stay.

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□The Drach Caves were somewhere else I wanted to visit. Located at the southern end of the island, the Dragon's Caves (to give them their English name) were certainly well advertised everywhere we went in Mallorca. The Disney shore excursion takes you to Drach Caves and Porto Cristo (\$65/adults, and \$42/children), where you get some free time. I was very tempted to try and squeeze in some time to get to the Drach Caves, but you tour it by riding a boat along a large underground lake, and at the time of year we were visiting, the schedule of boat rides was very limited. Add to that, there's no photo or videoing allowed in the caves, and it didn't make it on to our itinerary, but if we ever went back, I think I would head there, as the photos I've seen of it look stunning.

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□All in all, we found plenty to do in Mallorca over the three days we were there. If I was visiting for just the day on the Magic, I'd definitely

concentrate on Palma. It's a beautiful city, and I was absolutely enchanted by the place. It had a very laid-back feel to it, and we loved seeing the cathedral and Bellver Castle. One other place I can thoroughly recommend as well is the stunning Palau de l'Almudaina, which was built using the walls of an Arab fortress. Sadly, it's another place photography is not allowed, but I will always carry wonderful memories of the beautiful rooms there.

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□ The island of Mallorca, off the coast of Spain is one of the destinations on the four-night Mediterranean cruise from Barcelona, departing on 7 August, 2014.

*About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)*

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