



**BELMOND**  
**LA RESIDENCIA**  
MALLORCA



**PRESS KIT**

Belmond La Residencia introduced by Gillian Rhys

**HISTORY & BACKGROUND**

The hillside village of Deià, on the northwest coast of Mallorca, embodies “the other side” of the largest of the Balearic Islands. Its gentle atmosphere is thoroughly sophisticated and relaxed. Distinctive honey stone buildings with their terracotta roofs and green shutters run in tiered terraces down the hill, punctuated by verdant trees and tiny, winding streets. Added to all this is the appealing weather: warm in spring and autumn and balmy in high summer. It’s little wonder that this enchanting enclave with its special energy has become a refuge for artists and the international elite. At its heart sits Belmond La Residencia.

The property is made up of several historic buildings including two 16th-century manor houses now conjoined to form the nucleus of the hotel. There’s an olive press room originally belonging to the manor, now a fine dining restaurant, and a watchtower, thought to have been built by Cistercian monks in the 14th century to guard against pirate invasion. This clutch of stone structures was turned into a hotel in the mid 1980s and has been owned by Orient-Express Hotels (now Belmond) since 2002.

**FEATURES**

There are just 67 guest rooms and suites at this boutique hideaway. While no two are the same, each has been kept in a traditional Mallorcan style with a nod to rustic chic: all white walls, beamed ceilings and terracotta tiled floors with an abundance of rugs, antiques and artworks.

For families and groups of friends or simply for those seeking more privacy, a villa next to the hotel offers three bedrooms, a kitchen, dining area and private pool.

Belmond La Residencia’s generously sized grounds encompass citrus and olive groves, tiered terraces, traditional dry stone walls and even a sculpture garden. Dotted around the gardens are superb facilities including two outdoor swimming pools, four restaurants, an art gallery, spa and tennis courts.

The hotel is embraced by the Tramuntana Mountains which attract keen hikers and cyclists—especially during the spring and autumn. Guests who fancy exploring by bike have the chance to go out with a professional cyclist as a guide. Belmond La Residencia even has a selection of cycling suits available for guests.

But while some visitors are eager for a sporting challenge, others are happy to relax by the pool, and rarely leave the hotel throughout their stay.

## PEOPLE

### **Ulisses Marreiros, General Manager**

Ulisses Marreiros has been general manager of Belmond La Residencia since 2013, having previously held the same position at Belmond Reid's Palace in Madeira. He began his career in hospitality on the Algarve and worked in the Maldives before returning to the Iberian Peninsula. He has a degree in hotel management from Algarve University and attended hotel management programmes at Cornell University as well as recently completing a Harvard Manage Mentor programme.

"I've been here four years and I'm starting to get that feeling of a place you don't want to leave," Ulisses says. "Although the hotel has been here 32 years there are always new ideas coming through."

Ulisses is proud of the links between the hotel and the local community: "We have a very strong relationship with the artists in Deià. It's fun for the guests to meet and talk with them. And through our art masterclasses, guests can make something with their own hands and take it home. It is not just a reminder of the holiday but something that they have created themselves."

He says gastronomy and the spa are also very important to the hotel: "The spa is evocative of its rustic setting and as with nature, we are always evolving new experiences."

One of his favourite Belmond La Residencia activities is the donkey trail to the top of the olive groves – to a viewpoint with a spectacular panorama. He also recommends the Vespa scooter excursions: "It's wonderful to discover the beautiful little villages along the winding roads around the hotel," he says.

### **Cecilie Sheridan, Art Curator**

Artist and art teacher Cecilie runs the hotel's acclaimed art gallery, Sa Tafona, and organises regular exhibitions focusing on Deià-based artists.

Cecilie has resided in Deià for more than 40 years and lives just in front of the property. She has been linked to the hotel since its earliest days. Along with her late husband, George Sheriden, Cecilie has amassed a large collection of paintings by local artists, many of which hang on the hotel walls. Among them are works by both Cecilie and her husband. Cecilie leads a weekly art tour of Deià, visiting interesting studios, for Belmond La Residencia guests.

### **Art and Artists**

There is a strong link with the creative world in Deià and it started not with painters but writers. Robert Graves, the charismatic novelist and poet, was among the first to discover the area — and other similarly talented figures followed. Graves is buried beneath a cypress in the local churchyard, and his former home, Ca N'Alluny, is now a museum. Archaeologist and artist William Waldren was another major Deià personality. His widow, Jackie, presides over the village's fascinating museum of archaeology that he created.

Belmond La Residencia boasts its own art gallery and 750 original artworks by mainly local artists adorn its rooms. This collection of modern art, started by George Sheriden, is one of the largest of any European hotel. Every two years the hotel organises the George Sheriden Prize, a competition which supports local artists.

The hotel also displays one of the biggest private collections of original works by Joan Miró, the celebrated Spanish artist who became one of Mallorca's adopted sons. The works are displayed in the bar and the Café Miró bistro, making them available for public view. The 33 pieces are owned by the Successió Miró which is made up of relatives of the artist with whom the hotel maintains a close relationship. Recent shows include Joan Miró's Mallorca Series and works by Antoni Tapiès, a contemporary of Miró.

The hotel lawn, one of Spain's largest outdoor sculpture gardens, features Tête, 1975, a wonderful Miró bronze head. The sculpture display is curated by Juan Waelder, one of the hotel's three resident artists together with a painter and ceramicist. All three offer regular masterclasses at the hotel.

## EXPERIENCES

### Donkey Trail

Belmond La Residencia is home to five donkeys: Alba, who is mascot of the kids' club, Pancho, Luna, Negret and Fosca. Once a week, guests have the opportunity to join three of these lovable creatures for a stroll up through the olive groves to a hillside peak with a shepherd's stone refuge offering wonderful views. A typical Mallorcan lunch is laid out here with food and wine including local breads, olive oil, tomatoes, cheeses and meats.

### Vespa Excursions

The hotel's two Vespa scooters are in high demand for touring the surrounding countryside, designated a Unesco World Heritage site since 2011. Guests ride along the winding roads to the pretty villages of Fornalutx, Soller and Valldemossa – where Chopin lived for many years – and the attractive marina of Port de Soller.

A choice of colour-themed picnics are on offer for guests to take on the various Vespa routes. These include Mediterranean Blue with a seafood theme for jaunts to delightful coves and Orchard Green with healthy salads and vegetables for trips among citrus orchards and fields.

### Walk and Talk

Art curator Cecilie Sheridan leads this complimentary weekly tour from the hotel, visiting Deia artists in their studios. Guests meet painters such as Arturo Rhodes and David Templeton, while Cecilie offers insights into the Deia art scene along the way.

### Spa

Set in its own building, the award-winning Spa is redolent with Deia's rustic chic atmosphere. Featured brands include Aromatherapy Associates, Carole Joy and Natura Bissé from Spain, while signature treatments incorporate ingredients grown in the area. The Almond Delight Facial is a face massage with warm almond oil followed by a sweet almond mask; the Olive Activator uses Belmond La Residencia's own olive oil for a lymphatic body massage and the Citrus Siesta includes an olive oil body exfoliation followed by an almond, lemon and orange oil massage.

Beyond the many treatments – available inside or on al fresco terraces - there's also an indoor pool and outdoor hot tub and complimentary weekly yoga and Tai Chi classes.

Alternative therapist Anja Burkhard visits Belmond La Residencia Spa once a month for a week-long stay. Anja's intriguing speciality is Body Talk. Through hands-on healing, carried out fully clothed, Anja can diagnose problems in the body and help it to heal itself.

As well as hands-on healing, Anja may use Timewave – a computer programme with its roots in quantum physics. While in her home country of Germany she worked in a lab alongside specialists who were researching the effects of space on the human body and from there the Timewave programme was born.

Even the most cynical of clients have been won over by Anja's results and many book their trips to coincide with her stays. In some cases she has cured ailments in just one session.

### Children

The children's club, Smile, was introduced three years ago for four- to 12-year-olds. Until recently the hotel allowed children to stay only in July and August and over the Easter holiday but this has now been relaxed and a special welcome afforded to younger guests. Many of the masterclasses offered to adults, including pottery workshops, cooking classes and tennis coaching are now also available for children. Child-sized bathrobes and slippers are provided in the guest rooms.

In addition to the Spa's indoor pool, the hotel has two outdoor swimming pools, one of which is for adults only and the other designated for families.

### Food and Wine

Gastronomy is a cornerstone of Belmond La Residencia, under the baton of Chef Guillermo Mendez who has been with the hotel for 27 years. Guillermo, a native of nearby Soller, started working in a professional kitchen on Mallorca at the age of 12. He went on to train with Raymond Blanc at Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons among other leading culinary establishments.

Chef Guillermo oversees all the hotel's restaurants including the romantic, fine dining El Olivo, housed in a former olive press room, the more casual Café Miro which serves tapas on a pretty terrace and Son Fony, where breakfast is served with a backdrop of the swimming pool and Tramuntana mountains.

The Mediterranean cuisine features several Mallorca-influenced signature dishes. These include a suckling pig roasted for 32 hours at 65 degrees so the skin is crisp and the meat tender; and Gambas de Soller made with prawns from the Bay of Soller and island salt. The dish is served in a pretty box made by one of the hotel's resident artists.

As well as top international wines, Belmond La Residencia offers a choice from the burgeoning local wine scene. The quality of Mallorcan wineries has improved hugely in recent years, led by wineries such as DO Binissalem which uses local grape varieties including the reds Manto negro, callet and gargollasa and the white grapes moll, prensal and perellada. There are now some 80 wineries across the island producing wines from local grapes or, like Pla de Llevant DO, a blend of local and international varieties such as chardonnay with giro blanc or moscatel. Belmond La Residencia carries 25 of the best Mallorcan white, red and rosé wines.

## COMMUNITY

The hotel grounds include a 30-acre grove of 1,500 olive trees, some more than 500 years old, that is undergoing constant restoration. Belmond La Residencia produces its own olive oil, pressed by a co-operative in nearby Soller and available in the hotel's restaurants and shop. The label is designed by local artist Jaime Colorao. Guests are invited to adopt an olive tree, thereby helping to keep this ancient agricultural practice alive.

A new organic garden has been planted with aromatic herbs, furthering the hotel's aim for 2016—to make 40% of its foodstuffs zero miles.

Belmond La Residencia has forged many connections with local companies and residents. Its turndown gifts include salt from Es Trenc in southeast Mallorca, and a 'lucky starfish' made by Joanna Kuhne, a ceramics artist who lives in the village. Joanna also makes the charger plates used in El Olivo restaurant. The beautiful glass plates in the restaurants and wooden Gambas de Soller dish are also designed by local artists.

The hotel has recently begun to use artisan knives made by a fourth generation local craftsman. These are traditionally used for spreading sobrassada (a soft sausage served at breakfast) onto bread. Belmond La Residencia can arrange for guests to visit the forge where the knives have been made for 120 years.