

el Periòdic News

Miguel Tur

SANT ANTONI DE PORTMANY TOWN'S TOURISM COUNCILLOR

«People think Ibiza is a party place, but they don't know Ibiza that dazzles and makes you fall in love»



Sant Antoni is the second largest municipality on the island of Ibiza, Spain; however, contrary to the stereotype, this city (and, indeed, the whole island) offers more than just club culture and non-stop music. You can also taste delicious Mediterranean cuisine, take part in sporting and cultural events and get lost in secluded corners. Here, we speak to Sant Antoni City's tourism councillor, Miguel Tur, who is passionate about the sea and judo, and is enamored with his hometown, Sant Antoni, a city you can't help but fall in love with at first sight.

—The first question is: what does the word "Ibiza" mean?

—Ibiza is a multicultural word, derived from the Phoenicians, Romans, Carthaginians, Moors and Christians. Translated, it is a kind of brotherhood among all cultures that came to this island.

—How did the island develop? How did this musical culture, known today all over the world, originate? The Romans used to use us as a place to produce the colour purple (very difficult to make), the Carthaginians for wine and the Phoenicians for oil. Here, in Sant Antoni, the first port of the Balearic Islands was born; today, it

is the largest of them all.

Then there was a bad period: the Vietnam War and the post-war period...the population starved.

Ibiza was revived when the rich sons of America did not want to go to war and escaped here. And the whole tourist centre of the sixties was for them, the billionaire hippies who led a different lifestyle. The local islanders, thin and dressed head to toe (because the sun shone mercilessly), saw naked people on the beaches, enjoying life. Then, in the seventies, a very wealthy Pacha family - and a couple of other wealthy Catalan families - came to the island and created the concept of the island of music.

This image developed quickly, and Ibiza became the symbol of "fiesta." All were brothers and sisters, even without knowing each other beforehand. This is what made the island special and known all over the world.

I say the Balearic Islands and people don't always know where they are; but, I say Ibiza and they say: "oh yes, Ibiza." And it's because of the music!

—Who are your tourists today?

—Eight years ago, 100% of Sant Antoni's tourists were English. Now, they are about 60%, and the rest are Dutch, Italians, French, Americans and Spanish.

There is, however, a problem. About 20-30% of our tourists are of unknown origin; we don't know where they live and how they



TOWN HALL OF SANT ANTONI

move around. Another problem is our roads. Now, we have 300% more tourists than we had in the 70s...

And then, you can imagine, the Madrid, Barcelona and Ibiza airports are the ones with the biggest influx of travellers in summer. Our international airport carries thousands of people. We have flights to Italy, France, Germany, the US...and now we're trying to get direct flights to China.

Five years ago, we didn't have 5-star hotels; currently, we have two built and four under construction. The projects cost 170 million euros. And they will be some of the most luxurious.

So far, about 50% of the hotels in Sant Antoni have four stars.

—What are the biggest events planned for this year?

—Everyone goes to Ibiza for the clubbing life; in that sense, we don't need any extra publicity. Eight years ago, we started a different advertising policy and explained that Ibiza is also a destination for gastronomy,

sports and tourism.

Our holidays include Sant Antoni Abad, celebrated on 17 January, and honours the patron saint of winter, alternating with another holiday, Saint Bartholomew, the patron saint of summer festivals. The island's oldest folklore festival also takes place at this time of year.

From 17 to 19 May 2024, Sant Antoni will be the dance floor for the IV International Swing and Lindy Hop Festival, with over 52 hours of live music.

In June, Sant Antoni will host Gay Pride at S'Arenal Beach.

Each town also hosts regional festivals, and we widely celebrate Christmas.

—Every year, a group of Andorran judokas from the Hantei club, visit Sant Antoni. How was the visit this year?

—It is a very good tradition, maintained by the Dojo Kiay club of Sant Antoni (Ibiza) and the Hantei club (Andorra). Miguel Angel Costa Marin (Miki), champion of the Canary Islands and Spain,



ALL PYRENEES

Every year boys and girls of the Hantei club (Andorra) and the Dojo Kiay club (Sant Antoni, Ibiza) train together.

represents the Dojo Kiay club. Eladi López, 7th DAN Andorran judoka, represents the Hantei club. Boys and girls train together and spend their free time exploring our island. I am in love with judo; I joined a year ago. It's a philosophy of living that I discovered, thanks to Miki.

—What can surprise your tourists on a gastronomic level?

—Sant Antoni is a Mediterranean pantry that occupies 127 km². In addition to several Sols awarded by the Repsol Guide, the municipality has a fishermen's federation, an agricultural cooperative and a restaurant with a Michelin star.

For the past six years, we have been at the forefront of gastronomy. Our typical dishes are: *Bullit de Peix*, *All i Pebre*, *Arròs a banda*, the paella from Ibiza (which is not the same as the one from Valencia), the salad with crusts and all the fish we have.

We are the only municipality that has three wineries: Sa Cava, Can Maymó and Can Rich. Can Rich takes almost 50-60% of its

production to the world. And the rest stays at the national level.

The aim is to promote the municipality as a gourmet destination.

—What are the most famous clubs in Ibiza, in general, and Sant Antoni, in particular?

—In Ibiza, we have Pacha, Destino, Leo and Hai Ibiza - they are the biggest.

In Sant Antoni, we have Amnesia, Es Paradís and Mambo, among others.

And, in terms of music, we have everything! Ibiza is very eclectic. You can have fun and be able to choose the music you want.

—What magical places do you have besides night clubs?

—Es Vedrà is an energy point, a small island in the middle of the sea, a kilometre from the coast, shaped like a pyramid. It's a very magical place.

As I have said, people think Ibiza is a party place, but they are wrong. People don't know Ibiza that dazzles and makes you fall in



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love. There are unforgettable coves with crystal clear water; places where you and the earth meet.

—What water activities do you offer your tourists?

—Because our sea is very calm, there is no surfing; however, we offer diving. Sant Antoni has the largest green coastline on the island.

The seabed of the islands of Ibiza and Formentera harbours the largest living organism in the world, vast areas of oceanic Posidonia, eight kilometres long with a life span of over 100,000 years, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This underwater forest provides habitat for a multitude of species and is responsible for the transparency and turquoise colour of the waters of Ibiza and Formentera, making them one of the Mediterranean's best diving spots. We have been preserving Posidonia for ten years. Posidonia is the oxygen of the Mediterranean Sea!

—It would also be interesting to know how much of the budget goes

to beach cleaning and policing ?

—Twenty million euros are allocated for this purpose.

Sant Antoni is a municipality with a population of about 30,000, which grows to 180,000 between April and November. For 30,000 inhabitants, we have 50 local police officers. And when we have three, five, six or, occasionally, 10 times as many residents in the summer, the number of police officers remains the same. But, due to the influx of tourism, the law doesn't provide for an increase in the budget, and that's a problem. Spanish law is responsible for this issue.

—Is it difficult to buy land or a flat upon which to build?

—Sant Antoni is far from being the most urbanised municipality, and it is the greenest. You can't build here anymore. In this regard, we are the strictest municipality.

It's almost impossible to buy a house here; a 60 metre studio flat would cost 300,000 euros, but there are almost no offers. Renting a flat would cost between 1,500 to 3,800 euros a month.

Now it is strictly forbidden to build new hotels. Tourist spots are being sold for the price of gold.

—And without further ado: what does Ibiza mean to you?

—The sea... I don't understand what life is like without the sea. I'm a fisherman, I like to go out to sea in a boat. And I fall in love with sincere people.

I've travelled a lot, I've been to Oman, Dubai, Hong Kong... But there is nothing better than Ibiza! ●

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