

Ana Juan, Alejandra Ferrer and Carlos Bernús -president, vice-president/tourism councillor and chief of tourism marketing, respectively- are currently representing Formentera at Fitur International Tourism Fair in Madrid.

President Juan said that Formentera is presented at the expo as an "established" destination and that the island's marketing team is "hard at work promoting the quiet and respectful brand of tourism that we want." For that reason, expo attendees see an island where sunshine and beaches "fit snugly with our natural treasures, and offer of heritage, culture, fine dining and sport." Juan also cautiously highlighted "rosy 2023 forecasts for domestic tourism", which she described as "a leading market for Formentera."

Presentation

Today at the Balearic Islands stand, Vice President Ferrer and Mr Bernús presented Formentera to the press and specialised public. Ferrer rehashed memories of early tourism on the island, which has delivered quality of life improvements for residents at the same time it has thrown up many challenges, such as preservation and safeguarding the island's tranquillity. "This process has meant that the island now has a unique, familiar, simple and friendly identity where its hosts, the people of Formentera, want to welcome our guests, because they enjoy its uniqueness while taking care of it." In that connection, the crowd was shown a video titled "Formentera, an island to take care of".

Marketing activities at the expo will include meetings with specialised data and booking web portals, magazines, travel agents, tour operators and more. "We want to reinforce marketing to the travellers who, since 2022, have become the island's main market", said Ferrer, "the aim being to draw domestic tourists in the pre- and post-season or directly in the low season, since our proximity makes travel easier for these visitors."

'Blue Islands, blue and circular islands'

After the presentation, President Juan participated in another event, 'Blue and Circular Islands', together with representatives from other Spanish and Mediterranean islands. Juan joined the round table 'Women leading the change' and spoke of the "effects of triple insularity on an island facing a wintertime lack of connectivity, an issue that is finally being attended to", and

"the overabundance of boats on our coastline, one of the most crowded in the Mediterranean." Juan insisted on the need to set limits, and cited examples of work being done by the administrations like controls on anchoring in the natural reserve, regulating incoming vehicles on the island and the pioneering scheme to regulate and safeguard Estany des Peix. "We strive to achieve a balance between tourism and our residents' quality of life", she added.

This year, the Balearic Islands stand is inspired by posidonia seagrass and Formentera has a specific section with various promotional material on options for tourists, particularly families outside the high season.

In pre-pandemic 2019, domestic travellers made up 29% of Formentera's visitors, second only to visitors from Italy (37.2%). In 2021 and 2022, domestic travel spiked, accounting for 50.68% and 75.56%, respectively, of Formentera's total, growth that was driven by the pandemic. Last year, Spanish tourists continued to outnumber their Italian counterparts, representing 39.28% and 28.01%, respectively, of the island's visitors.

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