This morning, the Formentera Council unveiled a holiday activities programme conceived to break the Christmas mould and raise the Yuletide bar – child-friendly, fun-filled, cultural and festive, all at once. Sergio Jiménez, councillor of sport, local holidays and community involvement together with staff specialist Anna Costa were on hand to introduce the winter 2014 programme calendar, which this year has the particularity of placing Formentera's youngest front and centre.

Christmas for every boy and girl

No doubt the most closely-watched spot on the programme is the **Royal Cavalcade of the Three Wise Men** of the East, which will sally forth at 4pm from the Port of La Savina before cutting a path across the villages of the island, bringing with it street-theatre performances where a giant giraffe or two just might make an appearance.

Before that, though: **Diverespai**. From 17 to 21 December, mornings and afternoons, an array of inflatable games and other youth-oriented activities will be set up at the IES Marc Ferrer (secondary school) sports complex, forming a recreational installation that has become a Christmas favourite on the island. And for those crisp winter evenings: the **Sant Francesc Christmas Market** (Mercat Nadalenc de Sant Francesc), operational from 5 to 7pm, will host a variety of games and face-painting workshops for kids.

Then, for any children who still haven't had their fill, plan on **special workshops** (Christmas decorations workshop; 4 December, 5pm; Sant Ferran library), **storytelling** (“Contes d'Aprop” [Near-off Stories]; Friday 2 January, 5:30pm; Marià Villangómez library/“Contes del Cel” [Heavenly Storytelling]; Sunday 4 January, 5:30pm; cinema); **silver screen productions** (“La Niñera Mágica”; 10 December; Marià Villangómez library); and **Santa-chaperoned kids' parties** (22 December, 5pm, Sant Ferran tent, organised by Showsibiza) to make sure they do.

Christmas festivities

This year, the Christmas tent will be found at La Plaça de Sant Ferran, with a bill packed with festivities and a revolving cast of characters to ensure that everyone catches a bit of the holiday spirit. On 26 December, getting under way at 10pm, "**Poptour**" regroups members of the most memorable names in 80s Spanish pop.

The following Saturday, 27 December, the evening toning of the church bells will drag another holiday hibernator from his bed, **DJ Pharma** scheduled to take the stage at ten o'clock to wrap up Christmas right. The weekend after, on Saturday 3 January and at the same time,
Aires Formenterencs
and
Projecte Mut
will both do their part to rock and roll in the new year.

A Christmas full of culture and entertainment

In addition to the kid-friendly and musical, the 2014-2015 holiday calendar offers a plethora of cultural activities: an **organised hike** on 7 December with Eivissa Rural (to register, call 629386348); **two childen's workshops** – one centred on Christmas decorations (4 and 9 December, 5pm; Casal de Joves) and another designed to guide participants through preparation of their favourite Christmas cookies (20 December, 5pm; Casal de Joves) –; a concert of
a cappella Christmas carols
(11 December; first session at 10am and additional 11:30am session for visits by local schools; cinema); a
live-action re-enactment of Christmas in Bethlehem
put on by students of Col·legi Verge Miraculosa in Sant Francesc; a
group Christmas exhibition by local Formentera artists
(23 December – 10 January); traditional
caramelles songs
(12 midnight; Sant Ferran church; led by L'Esquadra de Caramellers de ses Roques); and finally, the
stand-up comedy of José Botó
, member of the Paramount Comedy Club and Club de la Comèdia (Sunday 4 January, 9pm; cinema).

Sergio Jiménez noted that the Council's collaboration behind the 2014-2015 Christmas and New Years calendar was aimed at “encouraging people to stay here over the holidays” and took the opportunity to push local residents “to do their holiday shopping at local Formentera businesses,” a nod to the Formentera chamber of commerce and Formentera Council's jointly-organised seventh annual Christmas window-decorating competition. Finally, Councillor Jiménez wished to show gratitude to the local Three Kings of the East association – Associació dels Reis Mags – for “their participation in the organisation of many of this year's events.”