



Cales Coves on the island of Menorca take some getting to, but offer a scenic reward

PORTUGAL Lisbon

THE INSIDER... Didier Mimoso, of Lisbon Hub, which offers bicycle hire, repair and advice on where to cycle. Show your bmbibaby boarding pass for a 15% discount on one-day bike tours. *5 Largo Corpo Santo, Baixa, Lisbon*, tel: +351 213 470347, www.lisbonhub.com

HIS TIPS...

- ▶ **SINTRA:** Head to this town which has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Trains depart Lisbon's Rossio station every 20 minutes for the 40-minute journey. www.bugeurope.com
 - ▶ **BEACHES:** Enjoy the golden sand near Caparica, 10km from Lisbon, and fresh fish in one of the restaurants, like Restaurante Porto Brandão. *25 Rua Bento de Jesus Caraca, Porto Brandão, Caparica*, tel: +351 212 959145, www.portobrandao.com
 - ▶ **THE LISBON CRITICAL MASS RIDE:** On the last Friday of every month, a two-hour ride leaves Marques de Pombal roundabout at 6.30pm. Go to Lisbon Hub (address above) by 5.30pm with your boarding card – the first six in April and May will be offered a free bike for this event.
- FROM THE AIRPORT:** The airport is 6km from Lisbon city centre. Aerobus No 91 to central Lisbon departs every 20 mins from 7.45am to 8.15pm; fare €3.35, valid all day. Taxi approx €15. www.ana.pt

FRANCE Lourdes

THE INSIDER... Liz Orfao is co-owner of Pyrénées Pursuits, a farmhouse retreat perfect for cyclists and tucked into the outskirts of Lourdes. *10 Cami de Bidale, Orincles*, tel: +33 (0)5 6294 4780, www.pyreneespursuits.com

HER TIPS...

- ▶ **LA PYRÉNÉENNE:** A real challenge and an open event for anyone fit enough to take on the Cols and foothills of the Pyrénées by bike! www.lapyreneenne.a3w.fr
- ▶ **AQUENSIS SPA:** Float away with a soothing hydro massage in the large thermal pool. *Rue du Pont d'Arras, Bagnères de Bigorre*, tel: +33 (0)5 6295 8695, www.aquensis.fr

hit the rooftop hot tub for breathtaking views of the pyrénéan foothills

- ▶ **PONT D'ESPAGNE:** A bridge over a spectacular waterfall that's also the start of an ancient smugglers route to Spain. About 30 minutes away by car via Cauterets. www.lourdes-infotourisme.com
- FROM THE AIRPORT:** The airport is 12km from Lourdes. Taxi approx €28. There is a bus service from the airport to central Lourdes, journey approx 30 minutes, fare €2. Tel: +33 (0)5 6232 9222, www.tlp.aeroport.fr



MENORCA Mahon

THE INSIDER... Andy Tysoe, of Menorca Bike Tours, recommends his favourite excursions on the island. *Es Castell, Menorca*, tel: +34 617 812024, www.menorcabiketours.com

HIS TIPS...

- ▶ **LA MOLA FORTRESS:** Built back in the 19th century for the British to defend Menorca from the French, these days you can take a guided tour, admire the sea view and go on a fascinating underground walk. *Mahon*, tel: +34 971 364040, www.fortalesalamola.com
 - ▶ **CAVES OF CALES COVES (ABOVE):** Now deserted, they were once inhabited by prehistoric people. With cliffs to climb down and turquoise bays to swim in, visiting them makes for an adventurous day out. *Near Cala en Porter*, www.holidays2menorca.com/beaches.php
 - ▶ **CALA SAN ESTEBAN:** This truly beautiful bay is overlooked by Fort Marlborough (Es Castell). Just a 15-minute drive from Mahon, it's the perfect place to bring a picnic and watch the boats on the water.
- FROM THE AIRPORT:** The airport is 4.5km from the city. Buses depart every 30 mins, 5.55am to 10pm. Journey approx 15 mins; fare €1.60. Taxi approx €10. www.menorca-airport.com

SPAIN Málaga

THE INSIDER... Kay Farrell, who works for Málaga Bike Tours. *1 Calle Trinidad Grund*, tel: +34 606 978513, www.malagabiketours.eu

HER TIPS...

- ▶ **PEDREGALEJO:** Walk along the beachfront from Málaga to this fishing village for incredible seafood at the many restaurants. Order *espeto de sardinas*, sardines on sticks cooked over an open fire. www.andalucia-travelguide.com
 - ▶ **MONTE DE MÁLAGA:** Just 15 minutes north of the city centre is a nature reserve where you can climb a mountain range, then eat hearty traditional food in the restaurants that line the reserve. www.andalucia.com
 - ▶ **THE SEMANA SANTA MUSEUM:** Pays homage to the *cofradías de semana santa*, the images of Christ and Mary used in religious processions. *Muro de San Julián*, tel: +34 952 210400, www.agrupaciondescofradías.com
- FROM THE AIRPORT:** The airport is 8km from Málaga. Buses to the city depart every 30 mins, 7am to midnight. Journey approx 45 mins; fare €1. Buses to Marbella vary. Journey approx 45 mins; fare €3.65. Trains to Málaga depart from 7am to 11.45pm; fare €1. Taxi approx €15 to Málaga; €50 to Marbella. www.aena.es

REPUBLIC OF MALTA Malta

THE INSIDER... Manuel Azzopardi, president of the Malta Triathlon Association. *1 Calle Trinidad Grund*, tel: +356 21 433657, www.maltatriathlon.org

HIS TIPS...

- ▶ **BOBBYLAND:** Locals love this homely restaurant that's perched on the Dingli Cliffs. It started life as the workshop for the Royal Air Force Signal Station and now its delicious octopus starter is among the reasonably priced dishes. *Panoramic Road, Dingli Cliffs, Dingli*, tel: +356 21 452895, www.bobbyland.eu
 - ▶ **PJAZZA SAN GORG:** Order coffee and a *qassata* (a savoury pie), then watch the world go by at this café on the square in front of St George's Basilica in Gozo's Capital. *Ferry from Mgarr harbour, bus to Victoria*, www.visitmalta.com
 - ▶ **MARSAXLOKK:** This traditional fishing village in the south-east is full of restaurants and open markets, where the catch of the day is served steaming on your plate or wrapped and ready to cook later. www.visitmalta.com
- FROM THE AIRPORT:** The airport is 6km from Valetta. Buses depart to the city centre every 30 minutes from 6am to 11.30pm; journey approx 30 mins; fare €0.47. Taxi €15.75. www.maltairport.com