



# LIFE'S A BEACH

There's more to Ibiza than skinny-dipping and lager swilling, as local DJ Tim Sheridan explains.

**T**here are two Ibizas. There is "Eye-beef-a", the hellhole of Sky TV's *Uncovered*. And then there is "Eivissa", its Catalan equivalent – a serene haven for all types of outcasts, brimming with a sense of history that thrums through your feet, even as you walk the ancient cobblestones.

One thing Ibiza does well is cater for everyone, from superstars to scumbags. You will arrive at the airport to utter chaos as a rule, unless you are wise enough to travel off-season. The long line of taxis moves slowly – as, in many ways, does the pace of life on the island. A hire car is recommended. All the big firms are there but I always use the long standing family-owned equivalent – always cheaper and sharper. Fernando from Autos Cala Sol will meet you and hand you some wheels with traditional Ibicenco politeness and reserve.

The airport is not far from Eivissa town, the capital, and the new and very hotly disputed Autopista (motorway) has made most road trips easy to handle. Passing near Salinas and the slightly more tourist areas of Platja D'en Bossa (home of "DC10" and "Space", two of the world's most revered clubs) you will enter or pass by Figueretas, the periphery of the capital and home to Hotel Es Vive. This is one of the groovier boutique hotels, frequented by those in-the-know, who like to be within striking distance of the action, yet in a

relatively quiet world of their own, overlooking the sea.

A single main road leads to Eivissa's central square. Old Town hotels such as La Ventana and Torre Del Canonigo are not cheap, but are splendidly isolated from the hurly burly and provide the views from the battlements seen by the eyes of Moors, Romans, Phoenicians and Carthaginians throughout the island's long and turbulent history.

You won't find many books on that history, but it seeps from every pore of Ibiza. One word encapsulates that more than any other and is as simple as it is surprising: 'salt'.

In days of yore, salt was the only means of preserving food, and was essential for shipping. As a result, Ibiza was the 'petrol station' of the Mediterranean, a place that every ship had to stop off in. Bing of such strategic importance, the island became one of the most invaded pieces of land in the world. The invaders remain to this day and are welcomed with a smile.

The *lingua franca* is generally English although don't expect it as a given. A few clumsy words of Spanish will gain sympathy everywhere especially, God forbid, with the Guardia Civil... the militaristic police! La Policia, the local municipal force are also present and are especially vigilant for wobbly drivers. But it's the big boys you'll most likely encounter on the roads – expect tough treatment from the heavies who are mostly imported from



the mainland on-season. You can't miss them in their combat greens and carrying shooters. They certainly won't miss you!

Geographically Ibiza is an almond shape with its point at the north and Eivssa and lager-lout hub San Antonio at opposite points of the southern end. Venture to the middle, Santa Gertrudis and you start to see the rural beauty and well conserved splendour of the island. Anything north of the

middle is considered 'proper' Ibiza and well away from tourists. In high season very, very few beaches are less than busy, with the locals and mainlanders in the know gravitating north, and the tourists everywhere else. Many beaches are secluded coves of immeasurable beauty.

The "superclubs" are pricey and predictable – so what's new? If you're looking for something more spontaneous, it's not beyond the range of the curious to find one of the legendary free parties that while very illegal, still pop up. These happen sometimes on Tuesday mornings after Cocoon at Amnesia, the German mega-party that has one of the finest reputations for quality... or perhaps you'll hear some news on the ridiculously packed outdoor terrace of DC10...

DC10 is on the way to Salinas (the Spanish word for 'salt'). These amazing and still very functional salt-producing basins are worth the visit alone and Salinas beach is hip, beautiful and largely unspoiled. You could easily spend the day there and find yourself up the road at Space or DC10, barely having moved more than a couple of miles overall.

Ibiza does only one thing better and more varied than nightlife and that's its frankly dazzling array of eateries.



**TIM SHERIDAN**  
Tim Sheridan left Ireland as a child and has been travelling ever since. He finally hung his hat in Ibiza in 2001 – although he's been one of the island's most prominent DJs and free party promoters for over ten years. More at: [www.myspace.com/timmysheridan](http://www.myspace.com/timmysheridan)



Make no mistake, the Christian veneer on Ibiza is a thin crust. The Moors held it for the longest time – and streets and places still bear the mark of their culture and architecture. You can eat Arabian at El Ayoun in San Rafael, or Thai fusion at Bambuddha Grove... every night is a gastronaut's spacewalk.

The Ibiza you are looking for will come looking for you, so arrive open-minded and you'll leave empty wallet-ed... but always satisfied.

**TIM'S TOP TIPS:**

Come early or late. June or September are rocking and less busy. Opening and closing parties of the clubs are the best. Always pre-book the essentials such as car, accommodation and even restaurants. It's obligatory in high season (July and August).

For the VIP treatment, get on board with Icon at [www.iconibiza.com](http://www.iconibiza.com), who will provide a bespoke visit from being picked up in a Hummer or Merc, given a top apartment, as well as club entry and even yachts!

- Remember:** Villas are killa! Club together and get one.
- Best Club** – DC10.
- Best Restaurant** – Bambuddha Grove.
- Best Beach Bar** – Cala Jondal, The Blue Marlin.
- Best Beach** – S'estanyol.

