



Beach on Santa Galdana bay

## Ferrieres 13

C/Sant Bartomeu. **Tel** 971 363 790 (Maó). 10am–1pm & 6–9pm Sat. Sant Bartomeu (23–25 Aug). **www.ferrieres.org**

Ferrieres is situated at the foot of the S'Enclusa hill. At 142 m (466 ft) above sea level, this picturesque little town is the highest settlement in Menorca. Its name derives from the many blacksmiths (*ferrieres*) who once worked around here. At the heart of the village is the **Plaça d'Espanya**. Here, at a weekly Saturday market, you can buy leather goods as well as produce brought in by local farmers, including vegetables, fruit, cheese and honey. In Plaça l'Església is the parish church of **Sant Bartomeu** (1705) and the town hall. It is also worth stepping into the **Museu de la Natura de Menorca**, to see a selection of the island's natural wonders.



Carrer Fred, close to the main square in Ferrieres

### Museu de la Natura de Menorca

C/Mallorca 2. **Tel** 971 350 762 or 971 374 505. 9:30am–noon & 6–9pm Tue–Sat; 10am–1pm & 6–9pm Sun. **www.gobmenorca.com/cnatura**

### Environs

About 6 km (4 miles) north of Ferrieres are the ruins of **Santa Agueda** castle. Not much remains of this Moorish stronghold, but the view from the top of the second highest mountain in Menorca justifies the effort of the 260-m (853-ft) climb.

The strategic advantages of the hill were well known to the Romans who, in the 2nd century, chose it as the site for their first fortress. The Moors adapted the site to build a summer residence for the Menorcan governor and improved the surrounding

fortifications. The fort was the last stronghold to surrender during the Reconquest.

Ferrieres is the centre of the leather industry. Along the road to Maó are several shops selling Menorcan sandals.

## Santa Galdana 14

5 km (3 miles) south of Ferrieres.

The only way to get to Santa Galdana is by car from Ferrieres or on foot, along the d'Algendar canyon. Situated on a beautiful bay, the town's popularity is growing, and a number of high-rise hotels have begun to pop up. Most of the other buildings are villas, set among the trees. The main tourist attraction is the

beach with its white sand and turquoise water, sheltered from the wind by high cliffs and a pine forest.

It is worth taking a walk west from here to the charming **Marcella cove**. The adjacent **Macarelleta cove** has a nudist beach. Both beaches are well established and can be accessed by steps carved into the rock.

Further west is **Cala en Turqueta**, probably the most beautiful bay on this part of the coast. Another beach, situated in a charming cove east of Santa Galdana, is **Cala Mitjana**, which is a lovely spot, though it can get busy in summer.



Festa de los Roselles in Ferrieres

### GIN IN MENORCA

One legacy of the 100-year rule of Menorca by the British is the tradition of producing and drinking gin, which was a popular drink with the many British sailors stationed here. Unlike the rest of Spain, where wine is the most popular tipple, Menorcan have taken to gin in a big way. The production process can be seen in the 18th-century Xoriguer distillery, next to the landing stage in Maó (see p96). The gin produced by the Xoriguer distillery is the most popular brand on the island and is sold in *canecas* – ceramic bottles reminiscent of the clay jugs that were once used by British sailors.

Gin from the distillery in Maó



### Further Afield

Venturing outside Maó's centre involves a pleasant stroll along narrow avenues lined with quaint houses, and passing all the main historic sights of the town. The most interesting include the magnificent chapel of the Immaculate Conception in the church of **Sant Francesc**, built in an ornamental Spanish Baroque style. The **Museu de Menorca** is also well worth a visit if only for its extensive range of items from the Talayotic period. Another interesting place to see is the **gin distillery**.

For a longer hike, Maó is a good starting point for a walk along the coast – head north to **Cala Llonga**, or south right up to **Port de Malborough**.



Some of the Xoriguer distillery's ancient gin-making equipment

### Xoriguer Distillery

Andén de Poniente 91.

Tel 971 362 197.

Gin production on the island is a legacy of the British occupation, although its local brands taste rather different to the ones currently produced in Britain. You can acquaint yourself with the gin distillation process by visiting the Xoriguer distillery, close to the harbour steps, which was founded in the 18th century.

As well as juniper, which is imported from the Pyrenees, gin contains a number of other aromatic herbs. Menorcan gin is sold only in Menorca and in a handful of restaurants in Mallorca.

The distillery also produces various liqueurs, including the *bierbas* that are believed



Gobierno Militar, one of the most magnificent buildings in Maó

by some to have therapeutic properties. All these drinks can be tasted on site, and of course bought in the shop.

### Sant Francesc

Plaça de Monestir. ☛ 6:30pm daily, 10am, 7:30pm Sun.

The church of Sant Francesc with its light-coloured Baroque façade (1719–92), stands at the end of **Carrer Isabel II**.

The church's imposing interior has a vast, dark nave with a soaring Gothic altar at the end of it.

The church's most outstanding feature is its octagonal chapel of the Immaculate Conception built in a fanciful Spanish Baroque style and decorated with stucco garlands of vine and roses. This is the most beautiful example of Baroque ornamentation in Menorca. Its creator is believed to be the famous painter, sculptor and architect, Francesco Herrera.

Adjoining the south side of Sant Francesc is the monumental structure of the monastery, with an arcaded courtyard. Currently it houses the Museu de Menorca.

### Museu de Menorca

Avda Dr Guàrdia s/n. Tel 971 350 955. ☐ Apr–Oct: 10am–2pm & 6–8pm Tue–Sat, 10am–2pm Sun; Nov–Mar: 9:30am–2pm Tue–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat & Sun. ☑ public hols. ☑

This museum occupies the former cloisters of a Franciscan monastery. The collection includes works of art and archaeological relics. Many of the exhibits date from pre-historic times, and there is an extensive selection from the Talayotic period, as well as Roman, Byzantine and Arabic artifacts. Among the most

interesting exhibits are a bronze statuette of a bull, Punic jewellery and some huge amphorae.



Ornament from Sant Francesc

### Gobierno Militar

Carrer Isabel II. ☑

The Military Governor's House and army headquarters are housed in one of Maó's most beautiful buildings. The palace was built in 1768, during the second British

occupation. The building is still used by the army and can therefore be seen only from the outside, though the arcaded courtyard is well worth a peek.

### Plaça Bastió

This small, irregular-shaped square has limited vehicle access, and serves as a good place for children to let off steam. Visitors who are fatigued by sightseeing often stop here for a rest.

At the north corner of the square stands



Courtyard of the former Franciscan monastery