



SUNNY ISLAND IN NEW LIGHT



explore more!

MALLORCA BEYOND THE BEACHES

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1x 50 min., 4K, 5.1



For millions of tourists each year, Mallorca means summer, sunshine, and fun. But this Mediterranean island has so much more to offer. This film takes viewers on a journey to explore the remarkable wonders and hidden beauty of Mallorca's lesser-known landscapes.

Beyond the beaches, spectacular natural phenomena await discovery. Few places are as deeply shaped by tradition and challenging terrain as Mallorca. Dominating the island is the breathtaking Tramuntana mountain range, stretching 140 kilometres and rising to heights of up to 1,500 metres.

Mallorca is home to extensive wetlands that serve as vital habitats for hundreds of bird species. The island also boasts a rich heritage of dry stone wall construction – a tradition so significant it has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. If laid end to end, these walls would stretch halfway around the globe. Additionally, Mallorca is famed for its subterranean limestone caves, many of which remain only partially explored.

The Legacy of the Moors

When the Moors conquered Mallorca at the beginning of the 10th century, they faced a considerable challenge: the fertile but steep slopes of the Tramuntana Mountains were unsuitable for cultivating fruit. To overcome this, they introduced the technique of building dry stone walls from carefully arranged limestone. These terraces not only enabled agriculture but also created microhabitats for a wide variety of wildlife. The gaps and hollows in the walls offer frost-free winter shelters and hiding places for wild bees, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Even birds like the wren hunt for insects in the wall crevices.

The Underworld of Mallorca

Much of Mallorca's geological makeup consists of marine limestone. Over millennia, rainwater mixed with carbon dioxide has gradually dissolved the rock, giving rise to a network of caves, riddling the island like Swiss cheese. Rainwater that infiltrates the Tramuntana Mountains resurfaces in the lowlands through more than a thousand springs. The most fascinating of these are the springs of Ses Ufanes, where, after rainfall, water suddenly bursts forth from the forest floor with dramatic force.

Hope for the Nursehound

The underwater world surrounding Mallorca is rich in biodiversity, but some species have experienced alarming declines. One such species is the nursehound. In June 2021, a conservation initiative was launched to bolster the population of these sharks in the Balearic region. At Palma Aquarium, a "founding

population" is being carefully bred, and each year, more than a hundred young sharks are released into the wild to help restore their numbers.

Es Trenc – The World of Salt Flats

The salt flats of Es Trenc have long been among Mallorca's most important bird sanctuaries. Around 200 bird species inhabit the shallow lagoons, including wading birds, herons, various ducks, and birds of prey such as ospreys and marsh harriers. But one species, in particular, steals the spotlight: the striking flamingos, whose vivid plumage adds a splash of colour to this unique ecosystem.

Ark of the Monk Vultures

A remarkable conservation success story on Mallorca is that of the monk vulture – Europe's largest bird of prey. When Austrian biologist Evelyn Tewes arrived on the island in the 1980s, only a single breeding pair remained. The birds had been systematically poisoned or shot by goat and sheep farmers. Thanks to Evelyn's tireless dedication, the population has made a dramatic recovery. Today, around 150 breeding pairs of monk vultures once again soar over Mallorca's skies.

**A co-production of Doclights/NDR Naturfilm
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