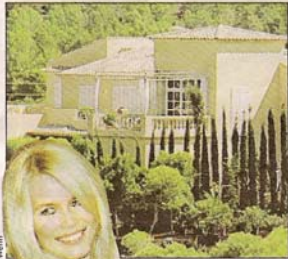


Make mine Majorca

The sun shines 300 days a year, the rental is good and you can rub shoulders with the celebrity jet set.

Caroline Phillips is blown away by the Balearics



Werns

Model pad: Claudia Schiffer (left) has kept up a long association with Majorca, first coming to the island as a young girl with her family.

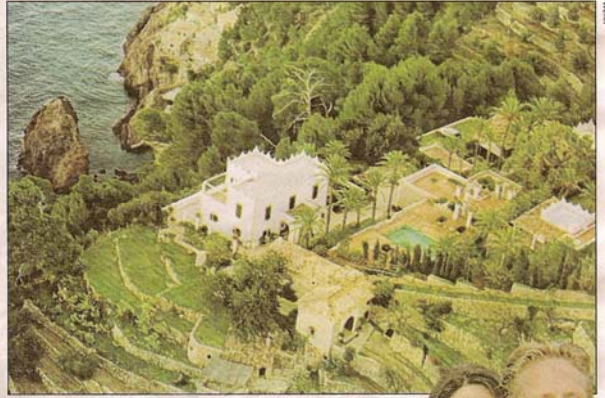
Since then she has fallen in love with a number of properties (above) as well as building her own

Rich Lee

ANDREW Lloyd Webber has bought in Deià, midst the über-squillionaires and green-shuttered ochre houses. Claudia Schiffer has built her summer home in Andratx, among hillsides covered in almond, orange and olive trees. Not to forget Annie Lennox — who has probably gone for walls a whiter shade of pale. Oh, and then, of course, there's Michael Douglas, who takes it in turns with his ex-wife, Diandra, to stay in their house — each reputedly re-decorating when they move in. Welcome to Majorca where, it is said, the sun shines 300 days a year.

My first tip, given Majorca's enormous airport — is to fly by private jet from wherever your cyber bucket-shop cut-price flight drops you. Otherwise you may spend most of your house-hunting trip walking to customs. During this trek, you may dream of a finca, desire a beach-side property, lust after a plot of land or yearn for a villa. But, with its capital Palma hailed as the "new Barcelona", I opted to search for bricks and mortar there

It is in Palma that you can eat jamón serrano at Bodega, Spain's best tapas bar, in the shadow of the Gothic cathedral. It is in Palma you can walk through the clean streets of the picturesque old town past convent doorways and hidden courtyards. And it is in Palma that you can buy fine olive oil and even finer summer sandals.



Werns

Stock up at Zara or wonder in Loewe — is your calculator broken? Then sit on the terrace of Es Baluard, the museum of modern art, and sip a drink while the sun sets over the sea. I stay in Hotel Tres with its cool, contemporary interior and get Terence Panton, director of Engel & Völkers estate agency, to show me around.

"Demand," he says, striding through the streets of the old town, "is mainly for apartments and town houses." Owners can expect a rental yield of about £1,000 and £2,000 a month respectively. "That belongs to a British, and that, and that," he says flapping his hand at various buildings. The main buyers in Palma are British, accounting for about 30 per cent of the market. Indeed, many regularly leave the Sceptred Isle just to weekend on this Balearic Isle.

King of the castle: Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones (right) regularly stay at S'Estaca (above), Douglas's Majorcan estate



Martin Spinkman

a museum (which is what it was). I explain to Panton that my tastes (and my means) are somewhat more modest. So third stop is a 3,228sq ft planta noble apartment, circa 1890 and formerly inhabited by a noble Majorcan family. For £1.08 million it has cellinas that reach the sky, fabulous entertaining

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