

## Global trends for a local audience - Mallorca as a travel & tourism hub, not just a destination

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Tourism defines Mallorca. It provides over one in five jobs and an even bigger share of the local GDP.

So what audience could be more interested in learning about the latest trends in tourism than a group of Mallorcan economists?

Last Friday the Mallorcan College of Economists held its annual awards evening and the keynote speech was given by Joan Vilà, Hotelbeds Group's Executive Chairman.

Local dignitaries in attendance included the President of the Balearic Islands, Francina Armengol, along with local media outlets to cover the news. Joan was interviewed shortly before his speech by the local Balearics television broadcaster IB3 to speak about the role Hotelbeds Group plays as the employer of over 1,650 people locally (with over 8,300 globally).

Joan spoke for over 30 minutes on a variety of topics impacting the global travel and tourism industry currently. Topics included the potential effects of artificial intelligence on bookings, trends for mobile phone reservations, how hotels need to adapt to the needs of millennial travellers, and the significant economic benefits of tourism on destinations. He also highlighted many important facts and figures, for example that the sector provides 10% of the world's jobs.

All this took place in perhaps the most emblematic of locations, the Gran Melia Victoria located by the marina in Palma de Mallorca. The beautiful venue is one of the flagship hotels for Melia, which is a locally founded business that is currently the 13<sup>th</sup> largest hotel chain globally with properties the world over.

Just like Hotelbeds Group, despite having grown into a truly global business, Melia remains headquartered on the island. Equally there are many other travel & tourism companies based locally that have international reach.

**Together they make Mallorca not just one of the biggest holiday destinations in Europe, but more importantly a global hub for the travel & tourism industry itself.**



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