



Hotel Review: Cugo Gran, Menorca, Islas Baleares in Spain

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Words by Codelia Mantsebo

Cugo Gran perfectly captures the serene style of the idyllic countryside of Menorca. Providing a sublime experience against a backdrop of immaculately manicured gardens, azure sea views and vineyards, this boutique hotel transports you to a tranquil slice of heaven as soon as you enter its traditional Menorcan wooden gates...

The cypress tree lined driveway to the hotel sets the tone for a vast landscape dotted with trees, wonderfully manicured shrubbery and panoramic Mediterranean Sea views.

Perched above elegant terraces that look out onto natural scenes, the 12 bedroom country house, which can also be rented in its entirety sleeping up to 24 guests, is dressed in chic neutral tones that make the contrasting green gardens and the blues of sky and distant sea appear all the brighter.

You won't find avant-garde artworks or gaudy interiors here. That isn't the focus at Cugo Gran, art pieces are outshined by some of nature's finest work.



Cugo Gran Menorca has a peaceful and serene atmosphere Image credit – James Bedford.com

With a talented gardener maintaining the grounds, the estate has its own vineyard, lavender fields, orchards and vegetable gardens. Donkeys, geckos and tortoises which quietly roam the grounds add to that natural glory.

An initial glimpse of the property does not reveal its old age. After years of renovation, the 200-year-old Menorcan farmhouse was transformed into an upscale, luxury country house offering peace and tranquillity, with exceptional attention to detail – a masterclass in modern Mediterranean good taste.

Although just 15 minutes away from the airport, the atmosphere of this secluded country estate is totally serene. The sounds of landing and taking-off planes are replaced by harmonic cicada rhythm, and an air of calm peacefulness.

Harry, the general manager, greeted us upon arrival with refreshing cocktails local to Menorca – followed by slightly disappointing news that our room wasn't quite ready yet.



The infinity pool offers relaxation or a refreshing dip Image credit – James Bedford.com

It wasn't long before we were walking through the gardens to the 26m infinity pool (which by the way, has butlers appearing every 40 minutes with chilled towels and refreshing drinks). We waited patiently while taking in the relaxing views from the sun decks.

There are seven rooms in the main building, and five in the boyera outbuildings which all have their own gated gardens. Each room is named after local areas or flowers and shrubs – beautifully decorated and full of light, with pale open wooden beams and natural wood floors.

Serenely rustic interiors lend this villa an elegant country cottage appeal. Our room, Poglea, located in the main house, offered picturesque views from the terrace. It was elegantly furnished, with crisp luxurious linens, towels and toiletries from The White Company. The refined, yet simple comforts made the perfect home from home.



The Poglea room is elegant and stylish Image credit – James Bedford.com

While this Spanish gem has stunning scenery, it's the attentive and enthusiastic staff that made our stay special. Nothing appeared to be too much trouble for them, and this is what truly makes Cugo Gran stand out.

They've mastered the right balance between giving you your space to enjoy your stay in a beautiful location, but also an unobtrusive team who's always willing to help make your stay as enjoyable as possible.

Each morning, we'd start our day with a lovely spread for breakfast outside, overlooking the gardens and the sea in the distance. There's no written breakfast menu, but the kitchen was always pleased to satisfy our morning cravings.

I almost-always opted for freshly made poached eggs from the chickens they have on site, though the pancakes with strawberries freshly picked from the garden were equally delicious. If you can wake up early enough, you can see (or join) the chef collect fresh eggs, vegetables and herbs directly from the grounds.



Early morning egg collecting Image credit – James Bedford.com

For dinner, we enjoyed spectacular sunset views along with the freshest seasonal and local ingredients – of course, much of it sourced from the hotel's own gardens. We ordered from the villa's new menu, created by head chef Roberto Sarrió.

The menu featured several Menorcan dishes with a contemporary twist, including signature rice dishes such as 'Paella with rabbit and Menorcan prawns' – which was divine. The menu changes seasonally, but do opt for the fresh catch of the day if available – you'll not be disappointed.

Sadly, dinner isn't served on Mondays – but the well informed staff are very happy to recommend the best local restaurants.



The menu showcases fresh local ingredients Image credit – James Bedford.com

The only certified 5 star Agroturismo in Menorca, Cugo Gran is so cleverly thought out, an ideal location for those with a penchant for all things natural and those wishing to escape the bustle of everyday life.

It's hard to describe this boutique villa – but it is not easily forgotten. The birdsong, the calm breeze, the glorious scents in the air and the breathtaking views that stretch as far as the eye can see remain so vivid in my memory.

Rooms start from €450 for a two-night stay on a bed and breakfast basis.

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