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The Standard

IBIZA

Behind a gleaming white façade, Standard International celebrates the energy of Ibiza, with interiors that recall the playful, bohemian spirit of the island.

Words: Agnish Ray • Photography: Courtesy of Standard International (unless otherwise stated)

Sun, sea and sand spring to mind when talking about Ibiza, but while admiring the designer furniture and decoration by Bruno Munari, De Sede and Jasper Morrison at the latest hotel to open in the Old Town, it's clear that a new kind of hip – more urban, global, curated – has arrived on the island.

The Standard Ibiza has already been called “the sexiest hotel in Europe” and stars are flying in from near and far for a stay. The 67-key property – which adds to the group's existing portfolio in the US, Thailand, London and the Maldives – is championing music, fashion and fun, while also looking to draw a more sustained kind of tourism to a destination otherwise famed for fleeting summer thrills.

Located in a former cinema, the interiors are spacious and airy. There is a cool white backdrop throughout, from the bedrooms to the building's gleaming façade, while lush plants, bright fabrics and colourful lighting elements recall the playful, bohemian spirit of Ibiza – what Standard International's Chief Design

Officer Verena Haller calls the “freeness of living” of its Seventies heyday.

The hotel was conceived by acclaimed Spanish designer Lázaro Rosa-Violán, with interiors by Oskar Kohnen in collaboration with Standard International's in-house design team. Their concept celebrates the energy that originally attracted so many to Ibiza, with references to the signature styles of the era – Flower Power makes an appearance, as do psychedelic patterns and bold use of colour.

The look is most prevalent at Jara, the ground-floor restaurant that opens out onto the lively Vara de Rey boulevard, where residents and holidaymakers stroll in the sun. “We wanted to create something for the neighbourhood, allowing locals to come and have their morning espresso at the hotel bar,” explains Haller.

The space is filled with an eclectic mix of decor, including vintage furniture, a hotchpotch range of cushions that Haller's team scavenged from flea markets and wall murals by Bogot-born artist Nicolás Villamizar. Lighting pieces



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along the bar are inspired by Verner Panton's 1968 flowerpot pendant lamp, with shades crafted from fabric found on the island.

Jara's menu features varied Mediterranean dishes, from sea bass with red and green mojo sauce to rice dishes like paella; there are plump prawns sizzling in garlic and a tangy tomato tartare with capers, mustard and radish. The drinks menu includes organic local wine made from Malvasia grapes, and three homemade variations of the Hierbas Ibicencas liqueur – Ibiza's traditional herb-based digestif.

Diners at the rooftop bar Up enjoy views across the Old Town and 16th-century castle while tucking into Mexican-style dishes like shrimp tacos, cochinita pibil and a flavoursome aguachile, along with several tequila-based cocktails. The rooftop also features a 15m swimming pool and hosts a spirited brunch event with live music every Sunday.

The venue made a splash with a star-studded launch party in May, with a 500-strong crowd swaying to a performance by Róisín Murphy, former frontwoman of Moloko, in between DJ sets by Maurice Fulton and Benji B. "Music is an important part of The Standard

lifestyle," says General Manager Christoph Venus Antuña. "At night we like to move and dance."

The sharply-clad glitterati in attendance left no doubt that cutting-edge fashion is at the top of The Standard Ibiza's agenda too. This is also clear from the staff uniforms, custom designed by SMR Days, the London-based studio specialising in effortless holiday wear and employing Indian craft traditions such as kantha embroidery, ikat weaving and leheriya dying.

The studio's bespoke capsule of handwoven cotton garments includes relaxed shirts and flowing kaftans designed with ajrakh block printing. "They're more hippy, floaty and sexy than what we normally do," explains Gautam Rajani, one of the practice's three co-founders, all of whom have visited Ibiza for years. "We looked to reflect the spirit of the island."

While the party spirit shines through in the public spaces, guestrooms are more pared-back in their approach, designed as havens away from the buzz. Natural materials such as timber, linen and jute make for a calming palette, while splashes of colour come from the soft furnishings.

For Standard International's first European property





after London, the Balearic bastion of joy and freedom seemed a logical choice. “If you want to expand in Europe, opening a hotel in Ibiza makes total sense,” says Venus Antuña, who previously ran two properties in his home city of Barcelona and spent a stint in Brazil with Palladium Group; he first came to Ibiza to work at nightclub-cum-hotel Ushuaia, before joining The Standard last November.

He says that, following the first year of the pandemic, 2021 was a surprisingly good summer for Ibiza’s hotel occupancy and F&B revenue. He attributes this to the fact that holidaymakers felt brave enough to travel but still exercised caution while abroad; and with nightclubs still closed, hotels reaped the benefit of those looking to enjoy Covid-safe experiences.

If the return of Ibiza’s clubbing scene this year means partygoers are flocking back to the island in droves, The Standard is well prepared. Its connections to venues like Pacha, Ushuaia and Pikes mean guests get access to the best parties in town, thanks to the expertise of the

guest services team; Sheila Martínez came from Pacha Group and Berni Morales is accredited by the Clefs d’Or concierge association. Other experiences on offer include jeep tours, yacht outings and hot-air balloon rides.

Unlike many of the island’s hotels that run for just the warmer months, The Standard will welcome visitors year-round, gambling on a steady enough influx of travellers beyond the peak season. Around three-quarters of the hotel’s staff are natives, according to Venus Antuña, who argues that the 12-month opening contributes to a more sustainable local economy by providing stable jobs for residents.

Offering a place to stay across the year is also part of shifting Ibiza’s image from a summer party hotspot to a more serious destination. “It’s only the clubs that are closed during winter,” Venus Antuña points out, whereas experiencing the island’s history, culture and natural beauty are for every season. While rejoicing in laidback Balearic living, it seems this new property also points to a new way of experiencing it.



EXPRESS CHECK-OUT

Operator: Standard International
 Architecture and Interior Design:
 Standard International in-house design
 team, Lizaro Rosa-Violán, Oskar Kohonen
www.standardhotels.com

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