



MAGIC MENORCA

Stunning hot spot has it all

■ John O'DOWD

I HAD never been to a horse show before — and I'd no great interest in going to one.

So, when we were taken last week to one in Son Martorellet on the island of Menorca, I wasn't expecting much.

How wrong can you be? What else can you say when you see a horse dancing with perfect rhythm to the music of Riverdance? It was a sight to behold.

That, above anything else, sums up Menorca in a nutshell.

A wonderful mecca of unexpected magnificence, where you are surprised every day by the quality on offer.

Not least of the gastronomic delights synonymous with the island.

Obviously, fish is huge, with lobster holding pride of place. Thankfully, for a man with an irrational fear of shellfish, I found a sumptuous ray baked with potatoes, tomatoes and breadcrumbs much more to my liking!

The Menorquins are also proud of their numerous brands of sausage and superb stuffed aubergines, and a visit to the Subaida farm is recommended to sample the various types of cheese.

Winemaking has also undergone a resurgence on the island. The Binifadet winery makes nine different wines (100,000 bottles a year) and a red and

white Merluzo is the pick of the bunch.

However, it is the world-renowned gin — Gin Xoriguer — that sets the bar high for all competitors.

Mixed with lemon cordial to make the famous pomada, it is a beautiful, refreshing drink, even for somebody who is more of a fan of the reliable pint of Guinness!

Outdoor activity, not surprisingly, is one of the chief attractions of any region with a Mediterranean climate.

Golf

From surfing, kayaking, sailing and scuba diving to football, basketball, volleyball and golf, there is something for everyone — but there are also more relaxed ways to enjoy yourself.

Museums, churches, forts and megalithic tombs abound, while walking tours provide hours of pleasure.

Menorca also has more than 130 natural beaches, while a boat trip along the harbour at Mahon is something that cannot be missed.

And kids will love a trip to the Lloc de Menorca Zoo, where owls, lemurs and macaque monkeys are among the many highlights.

SUNWAY Holidays is Ireland's largest Irish-owned tour operator — and is operating a weekly flight to Menorca departing on Saturdays until September. Its brilliant deals include:

● **2-star:** From €379pp, based on 7 nights at the 2* Los Lenticos in Calan Forcat, departing September 5. Family (2+2) from €1,359.

● **3-star:** From €589pp, based on 7 nights at the 3* Roc Lago Park in Calan Bosch, departing September 5. Family (2+2) from €1,779.

● **4-star:** From €659pp, based on 7 nights at the 4* Los Delfines in Calan Forcat, departing September 5. Family (2+2) from €1,786.

● **4-star:** From €899pp, based on 7 nights at the 4* Valentin Star in Calan Bosch, departing September 5. Adults only and services of a **Sunway** representative.

