

## MORE THAN 100 YEARS DEDICATED TO TOURISM

A lot has changed in Port de Pollençà over the last 100 years, and so too has Hotel Miramar, although even today, it still maintains its excellent service and affection for clients. Hotel Miramar is packed with beautiful stories written by its owners, but also its clients who return to stay here year after year, and by doing so, continue to write its history. The origins of the Hotel date back to the start of the 20th century. Like a lot of other families, the Borràs Cerdà worked in fishing, tough work for which it had a "llaüt" (traditional Balearic Island fishing vessel). The father owned the vessel, while his sons Cosme and Antoni helped him as sailors. Antoni Borràs was the youngest of the brothers and had other concerns and ideas that did not combine well with the tough work of a fisherman. The time came when he decided to emigrate to Buenos Aires where he began a new life: he worked in several jobs and after a few years he was hired to work in the residency of the president of Argentina as an assistant cook. Although he had work, his longing for home made him embark and return to his beloved Mallorca: having said that, he went back filled with new ideas and knowledge acquired in the splendorous city of Buenos Aires. Once in Pollensa again, he married Francisca Martínez and they settled in a house in Port de Pollençà, a gift from their in-laws. This is where the story of Hotel Miramar begins. In this house, the young couple opened a small inn, a grocery shop and a few rooms.

Over the years, with the arrival of travellers, they extended and refurbished their establishment. Hotel Miramar provided lodgings for the first tourists such as Fernando Moragues, who was able to photograph the transformation of a fishing house used as an inn-boarding house into a modern hotel. Artists also came to the hotel, such as Anglada Camarasa and his group until it became the painter's residence for a long period. In fact, some Argentine artists such as Tito Cittadini, Aníbal Nocetti, Robert Ramaugé, Luis Cordiviola and the Mexican Roberto Montenegro, protégés of the master Anglada Camarasa, settled at Hotel Miramar while they waited for a permanent residence on the island. Hotel Miramar was one of the first hotels in the area. The number of establishments increased considerably.

This is clear to see from the 1930 industrial registration: in Pollensa there were 4 inns and 2 guest houses; while four years later there were 2 hotels and 7 guest houses which means a quantitative and qualitative improvement in terms of tourism establishments. In 1930 there was no municipality in Mallorca with as many hotels as in Pollensa. Tourists in that era were mainly British, especially military servicemen that came to the island from India before returning home to their country. In fact, from the 20's on, the British squadron visited Port de Pollençà each year and the Consul stayed at Hotel Miramar where the flag of his country was flown as if the hotel was a consulate. The arrival of warships had a very significant economic impact on the area. There were also tourists from other countries and areas: Americans, French, Germans and Catalans. The large majority came in search of beach, that is why Formentor was one their favourite areas. They were also able to enjoy the sun in peace, and one of the first terraces where they could soak up the sun was the one at Hotel Miramar, which held lively dances at night, as well as lots of parties and celebrations. With the start of the Spanish Civil War, the Hotel shared its normal activity with that of becoming the headquarters of the Italian aviation company Ala Littoria, SPA. This company began to cover the route between Rome and Port de Pollençà, with a stopover in Cagliari (Sardinia). The

first flight took place on 19 October 1936, and the line was kept up until 7 December, when it was extended to Melilla and Cadiz. During the first few months, the Rome - Pollençà route took four and a half hours, there were two trips a week: the outgoing flight was on Monday and the return was on Tuesday. The Hotel jetty was used as a boarding and landing pier with the help of canoes used to take passengers to the planes, which were anchored a few hundred metres away. The company Ala Littoria had its central office in Palma, which was in some Viajes Marsans offices, although it later opened its own office in the Passeig del Born in Palma. The price of travelling from Pollençà to the city of Cagliari, on the island of Sardinia, was 300 liras, and from Port de Pollençà to Rome, it was 560 liras, while the prices for goods varied from 3 to 5.6 liras per kilo.

The closure of the offices was the result of Franco's troops taking victory in Barcelona, therefore the headquarters moved to the capital of Catalonia, and the company began to offer the Rome - Barcelona route. Francisca Cifre Martínez became the heart and soul of the company. She was self-taught and learned English just through contact with clients, without ever needing a teacher. Her husband, Gabriel Sastre Biblioni devoted himself body and soul to teaching, and carried out extraordinary teaching work, as well as helping out with hotel administration tasks. The Hotel gradually grew. Renovations were carried out until the boom of the 70's. From then on, the children of Gabriel and Francisca; Jerónima, María and Jose, joined Hotel Miramar, and along with the latter's wife, Margalida Vicens, they undertook renovation work and extended the hotel. In 1986 the Sastre family received the National Tourism Merit medal, in recognition of three generations of hoteliers who have refurbished this establishment at different times, while maintaining the style and character that captivated figures such as Anglada Camarasa. Today, the hotel is run by the fourth generation of the same family. Many things have changed but Hotel Miramar in Port de Pollençà continues with its select group of clients who return year after year to what they call their second home, thanks to the affection and dedication that all the Hotel staff investment in this emblematic, beautiful and century-old hotel.

The last large scale renovation took place in 1995. The hotel was literally stripped out and all of the rooms were fully refurbished.