When London's World Travel Market tourism expo opened its doors today, Consell de Formentera president and tourism chief Alejandra Ferrer was once again on hand to represent the island with director of tourism Carles Bernús. Formentera will share a stand at this year's event with the other Balearic Islands, while sustainability and environmental and cultural values will occupy a central place among the island's talking points.

For Balearic Islands Day tomorrow, the local delegation will unveil a programme built round the archipelago's status as a top-tier destination, with President Ferrer ready to spotlight the island's cache of treasures (natural settings, cultural commodities and heritage sites) together with infrastructure for sport and local gastronomy. The representatives will highlight local sustainability strategies like this summer's trial run of a scheme to cap the total number of vehicles allowed on the island, and measures to safeguard posidonia seagrass.

As President Ferrer pointed out: "British travellers are booking trips differently now, building their own holiday packages online. And that's an opportunity—we can be angling for better occupancy rates and more market share through direct sales".

Looking ahead to the 2020 season, the local reps will be using WTM to reach out to travel agents and PR firms from England, Netherlands and USA. They will also get meetings on the books with online portals and airlines.

In the ether at this year's WTM is the implosion of Thomas Cook tour operators and uncertainty surrounding Brexit. "British travellers constitute a slim 5% of our total visitors, but make up a considerable part of our off-season numbers", Ferrer said. "Formentera is coordinating its strategy with the other island councils and the regional government", she continued, saying the idea was to "roll with recent punches and get our numbers back on track, either by identifying new markets or reaching out to new tour operators and, ultimately, trying new promotional strategies".

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