

SPECIAL
DOUBLE
ISSUE

Condé Nast Traveller

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LAZY HAZY SUMMER

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THE NEW-WAVE MALLORCAN MAKERS

A BREED OF INNOVATIVE ARTISANS IS ADDING ANOTHER LAYER TO ISLAND CRAFTS WITH LIVELY PAINT PARTIES AND ALGAE-DYED FABRICS BLEACHED IN THE BALEARIC SUN. BY TOBY SKINNER



FANTASY LIFESTYLE



Clockwise from top left: Poco a Poco chair by Grason Ratowsky, Son Rullán; kitchen corner in the Espanyolet studio; Son Rullán garden; Lo and Grason Ratowsky in his studio; Son Rullán interior





DINNER PARTIES AT GRASON AND LO RATOWSKY'S 17th-century finca in central Mallorca all tend to end the same way. They'll start fairly typically: a local jazz trio jamming in the corner; a cool crowd of New York escapees sharing a *frito de marisco* seafood platter fresh from Palma's Mercat de l'Olivar; everyone heady on Mallorcan rosé and cosmic vibes. But then the party will pile into the studio next door, where Grason, an abstract painter and furniture maker from Colorado, will sit his guests down on one of his handmade Poco a Poco chairs and hand them a brush. 'Everyone gets a big canvas and the chance to go wild,' he says. 'It gets messy.'

Mallorca has a long tradition of homegrown artisans, creating everything from woven baskets to ceramics. There remains a dynamic scene of locals, among them Dora Alzamora Good, who shapes imperfect, instant-heirloom ceramic pots in a little workshop outside Deià, just like her mother and grandmother did; and Tone Marqués, of Con Alma Design, who works with her Barcelona-born partner Alvaro Garriga, making furniture and chopping boards from the

MOST OF THE PIECES IN THE FLAT ARE HOMEMADE: THE ART AND WONKY-WOOD FURNITURE, BUT ALSO THE BEDDING, WHICH THE OWNER STUFFS BY HAND

olive, almond, eucalyptus and carob trees on their 12th-century finca near Binissalem, in the centre of the island.

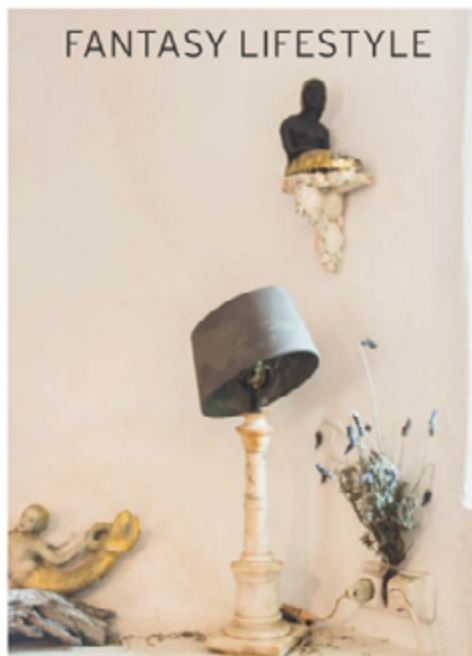
What's changed is the influx of foreign big-city types moving here, often to live in Art Nouveau Palma apartments and work in countryside studios, shaping urns or indigo-dyeing hemp. Just like Grason and his New Yorker wife Lo, who arrived in 2016, having fallen in love with the place on a four-day visit. As a child, Grason followed his figurative-artist father, Ian, around the world, while Lo grew up singing jazz, eventually winding up working on tech start-ups in New York. They met in a shady Bushwick bar, but were never going to be Brooklyn-bound forever. He soon whisked her off to Tennessee to record an album, and they travelled widely before settling in the Balearics, where they recently had a baby boy.

Blonde, doe-eyed, espadrille-wearing Ratowsky describes their life in Mallorca as 'wonder-driven'. He spends his days at the studio in Jornets, an ancient farming hamlet near Inca, surrounded by vineyards, olive groves and horses. He'll listen to Miles Davis



PHOTOGRAPHS: ALEX MARCUS; CARLEY RUDD; STUDIO RATOWSKY; JESSIE WEBSTER; YOLI & OTIS

FANTASY LIFESTYLE



Clockwise from top left: Dora Alzamora Good's studio; her mother's living room; orange tree; Alzamora Good ceramics; Lena Catterick shopping with her children Louie and Yolanda; detail in Alzamora Good's studio; Son Rullán. Opposite, from top: a painting and furniture made by Grason Ratowsky; Cala Sa Calobra; stone and copper lamp, painting and olive-wood coffee table by Grason Ratowsky





Clockwise from left: Mansion Dux; Espanyolet interiors; Grason Ratowsky; Dora Alzamora Good's studio shelf; Lena and Louie Catterick in their orange orchard



PHOTOGRAPHS: DORA ALZAMORA GOOD; MANSION DUX; TERESA MARENZI; STUDIO RATOWSKY; JESSIE WEBSTER; YÖLİ & OTIS

as he paints his wild, Picasso-esque figures and crafts furniture – Sevilla chairs, stone-and-copper floor lights, benches made from 17th-century Mallorcan roof beams. The couple also run Ratowsky Creative, doing mind-peace branding for right-on clients. Assuming they're not hosting a paint party at the finca, Grason will get the train back to their light-flooded apartment in the Palma enclave of Santa Catalina, where many newcomers are setting up boutiques. Almost everything in their flat is home-made: the wonky-wood furniture and wild art, obviously, but also the cushions and bedding, which Lo stuffs and sews by hand.

Their downstairs neighbours are Mallorcan fine-art restorers who moonlight as potters. Local friends include Italian Elisa Bozzolini, who runs ethical, boho-vintage clothing brand Sunvibes; and American ceramicist Tyson Strang, whose Kyrgyzstan-born wife Tatiana Baibabaeva makes dresses from handwoven macramé. 'There really is a scene building,' says Ratowsky. 'We're trying to push it forward – to have cocktail hours and cultured parties, just like Picasso and Matisse might have had.'

THE KEY PREFIX IS 'SLOW' – SLOW FOOD, SLOW FASHION, SLOW PRETTY-MUCH-EVERYTHING, INCLUDING STRICTLY OBSERVED SIESTAS

The scene, though, is still a tranquil one. The key prefix in Mallorca is 'slow' – slow food, slow fashion, slow pretty-much-everything, including strictly observed siestas. In Son Espanyolet, the district west of Santa Catalina, American Melissa Rosenbauer leaves her algae-dyed hemp throws and linen pillows in the sun for days, giving each a one-off shade of pastel or deep blue. 'There's no way to rush the process, even if we wanted to,' says flame-haired Rosenbauer, who named her brand Espanyolet after its home. 'In Mallorca, you get used to waiting, then grow to love it.' She and her German husband Thomas Bossert worked at a New York creative agency – before they quit, travelled, spent some time in Bali, lived in Berlin and finally ended up here. Their ethos may be avowedly slow-local, but it's filtered through to the global design set via a swatch-filled Instagram feed and indigo-dye Goop collaboration.

Among Rosenbauer's Mallorcan friends is elegant interior designer Chantal Verheijen and her architect partner Arndt Schilkowski, who used Espanyolet fabrics when renovating the eight-bedroom Mansion Dux on Palma's western fringe. Once a decaying, Cuban-style Art Deco villa, it's now a modern riot of stone, wood and colour, with a finca-meets-Havana vibe.

And everyone knows Lena Catterick and Carlo Letica, the photogenic, fair-haired couple behind Yöli & Otis, purveyors of gorgeous, herbal-dyed women's fashion and childrenswear. Their brand was born in Byron Bay, before the family relocated to a beautiful





Clockwise from above: a view from the hiking trail between Deià and Soller; bathroom at Mansion Dux; Dora Alzamora Good at work; her shelf of tools and a portrait of her uncle Victor; the garden at Son Rullán



villa in Canggu, Bali. Last year, Catterick, Leticia and their young children, Yolanda and Louie, moved again, this time to a vine-covered farmhouse with an adjoining orchard in the Serra de Tramuntana mountains. Now they split their time between the three bases, with the kids going to school in Mallorca; after homework, they help feed the chickens and pick avocados. Family outings might involve going for picnics of sourdough bloomers and aged Mallorcan cheese in the surrounding mountains.

'There's a magic about Mallorca,' says Catterick. 'Everywhere you look, there's something ancient which has a real story. The island has always had this artisan culture, but it feels like people are rediscovering and taking it on a step. It's a really inspiring place to be right now.'

To book a stay at Mansion Dux, visit dux-palma.com. For craft-focused tours in Mallorca, contact Españolita (espanolita.net)

HOW TO SPOT THE SPECIES

THE-CITRUS-CULTIVATING-FINCA-REPURPOSING-POST-EXPRESSIONIST-BATIK-EPIPHANY-POTTERS

In town, look out for females in floaty tea dresses (ethically sourced) and blonde locks (ethically dyed), chatting over octopus *causa* and stuffed artichokes at Santa Catalina's Patró'n Lunares restaurant, or browsing BConnected concept store, Palma's design-driven, independent answer to Anthropologie. Otherwise, drive up into the mountains and keep eyes peeled for signs of life in ancient fincas. The male New-Wave Mallorcan Maker will be wearing a smock or linen shirt with at least four buttons undone. Feet will either be bare or clad in handmade espadrilles, and accessories might include a straw hat or Warby Parker glasses, a nod to a past life at an advertising agency. In the countryside, where their studios tend to be located, both males and females display markings such as smatterings of batik dye or clay stains from the wheel. They often drift about in a post-siesta languor – with a creeping beatific smile, perhaps, as they recall their near escape from cramped subway trains – pondering the orchard's latest grapefruit crop, a particularly ancient fig tree or the crepuscular glow over Cala Deià.