

## History

### 70 years of memories

#### 1887 • The first villa is built in Benicàssim

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Joaquín Coloma Grau, the engineer commissioned with the work of building the Northern Railway, decides to build a villa where his wife can rest while the work is underway.

The house was called Villa Pilar, as it was built with the 15,000 pesetas of dowry that Ms. Pilar Forts Mas had brought to the marriage.

#### 1930 • The Voramar Restaurant is opened

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Juan Pallarés Picón, a graphic arts businessman, had discussed the idea of creating a social club with other summer holidaymakers where they could meet.

As they failed to agree on the details, he decided to carry out the idea alone, so in 1929 he applied for a license to build a permanent bathhouse and cafe restaurant on Las Villas beach in Benicàssim.

#### 1933 • Two floors of rooms are added

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The idea's success is demonstrated by the fact that in May 1931 an application was made to extend the concession to Juan Pallarés Picón to build a hotel and a front terrace extended towards the sea on the land set aside for construction.

One year later, the Department for Public Works authorized the project, and in 1933 the hotel was opened which, in time, has become an emblematic establishment of the province.

#### 1936-1939 • The Spanish Civil War

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The breakout of the Spanish Civil War in the summer of 1936 caused the villas to be abandoned by their owners, frightened by the seriousness of the situation.

Because of its perfect communication links and excellent, healthy climate and location, the military authorities took over all of the villas and rented the hotel. In May 1937, a large hospital complex was set up that would preferentially attend the troops of the international brigades wounded in the Battle of Teruel.

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One year later, the Nacionales (rebel faction) took Benicàssim and the Voramar changed hands. However, its function was unchanged, and it remained a military hospital until the end of the conflict.

### **1940-1950 • The post-war period**

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During the long post-war period, the Voramar became a residence of the Auxilio Social (Social Assistance) and later for the Sección Femenina (Women's Section). Meanwhile, Benicàssim gradually recovered its usual visitor numbers, and by the 50s was once more a hub of summer tourism.

In this decade, the Pallarés family regained management of the hotel, which was taken on by the founder's son, Juan Pallarés Soldevilla.

### **'60 • The 1960s**

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The end of the 50s and all of the 60s were witness to the one of the largest social revolutions of the past century: mass tourism.

Benicàssim was no longer a holiday getaway almost exclusively for the people of Valencia and Castellón, and the town began to receive a growing influx of foreigners visiting Spain in search of sun, beach and the country's low prices...

These were years in which tourism seemed an infinite source of unceasing development along the whole coast. The construction of apartments began, new hotels were created and existing establishments were extended.

### **1967 • Extension with three new storeys**

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Following the death of Juan Pallarés Soldevilla, his son, Juan Pallarés Tena, forced the hotel management to come in line with the new times, and he decided to extend the facilities to cover increased demand. The work was done in record time: although the hotel closed at the end of the summer season, regular clients were able to come back as in previous years the following June.

### **'70s and '80s • The 70s and 80s**

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At this time, there was a change in the type of visitors coming to Benicàssim. Foreign tourism gave way to domestic, and hotel construction ended as the holidaymakers mainly occupied their own or rented apartments.

The urban development completely transformed the traditional scenery, and older photos of Benicàssim are practically unrecognizable.

### **Today • The present**

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Since the 1990s, Benicàssim has made a great effort to improve its tourism image.

The promenade, the improved beaches and sports facilities are just a small sign of the changes that have occurred in the town to meet the demands of our visitors.

The tourist industry cannot be left behind in this task of upgrading the tourism on offer. Our clients ask for attention of the utmost quality and modern facilities. Rafael Pallarés, the present Voramar manager, is aware of this and maintains a policy of permanent improvement. Since his management began, the hotel has completely renewed its facilities and has achieved Quality Certification for Tourism Companies.