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Time to Tackle the Plastic

Over the summer, I caught up with a good buddy of mine - Philipp Baier. Philipp started LifeXperiences more than 10 years ago – initially serving clients on Mallorca. He helped me out when I first started Marsh-Mallows cycling events and I have agreed to help him out with his Cleanwave project.... From August onwards we have stopped using single use plastic and reduced all levels of waste... I caught up with him this week to chat to him about how it was going.

Before we started Philipp explained that they had just completed an event through LifeXperiences where 160 tourists cleaned the beach as part of their sustainable tourism incentive on Mallorca.

Asociaciones Ondine & Cleanwave were the key drivers. I was aware of www.asociacionondine.org through their connection with the Palma Tennis Club - but it was fascinating to hear about the research work they do to help increase the marine protected areas (MPAs).

LifeXperiences started as a two-man operation and now has more than 10 permanent employees in offices in Mallorca and Ibiza. The company now manages well over 200 events a year, which include corporate incentives, product launches and conferences, as well as high-end private parties and events.

A major turning point for the company and the team, took place in Ibiza in 2016, when they were managing a five-day event with 1000 people. Up until this point, LifeXperiences was committed to high-quality events, which also included water being provided to



guests throughout their stay. However, after doing the numbers, the team realised that they would need to buy 25,000 bottles of water for this group alone – and it was a watershed moment, with the realisation of the amount of plastic waste that this event would result in.

Philipp realised that he needed to create a new model. “We live on an island – rich in natural beauty – and at that moment I realised that we needed to take responsibility and play our part in preserving the Balearic Islands,”

And so for the event in Ibiza, 1000 stainless steel bottles were purchased, and water refill stations were set up throughout the event at all activities. Guests were asked to take responsibility for their own water consumption and many understood and supported the zero-waste concept.

The event on Ibiza was a turning point for LifeXperiences. The company now places a lot more focus on its role in promoting sustainable tourism. All events are now plastic-free, and for example, they recently managed a 2-day conference with 140 people on a zero-waste principle. When possible, all beverages and food is sourced locally, and all water is served in stainless steel bottles from mobile refilling stations.

Cleanwave.org

Born out of this shift in company consciousness, Philipp Baier was inspired to start Cleanwave.org.

Cleanwave is a non-profit initiative on Mallorca and Ibiza, which aims at tackling plastic waste from plastic water bottle consumption.

As most water from the tap on the Balearic Islands is not drinking water, people





are forced to buy it in plastic water bottles. We consume 1,5 million plastic bottles a day on the Balearic Islands. Only 18% is recycled – leaving over 1 million bottles unaccounted for each day. Some plastic waste lands up in the incinerator, releasing toxic fumes, some in landfills and a significant proportion ends up in the Mediterranean sea.

Cleanwave.org is a movement of likeminded individuals, businesses, restaurants and hotels who all recognise the urgent need to provide sustainable alternatives to single use plastics. The movement sells stainless steel bottles and is in the process of creating an extensive network of water refill stations throughout Mallorca and Ibiza. Consumers are offered the opportunity to buy a stainless-steel water bottle and fill up for free at any of the Cleanwave refill points.

Collaborators include restaurants, shops, yoga

and fitness studios, hotels and private businesses, who have a water filter system, and want to be part of the movement. Each of these locations also sells bottles.

How can you get involved?

- Buy a Cleanwave bottle - all our kids have one and we take them everywhere with us!
- Download the Cleanwave.org webapp and find your nearest refill station.
- Offer your shop, restaurant, studio or business as a refill location. Either you already have a water filter system, or cleanwave.org can recommend water filter experts to help you set up a water station.
- Sign up as a volunteer and join the Cleanwave team in promoting a plastic free world. Anyone can be part of the movement.

This Month's Ride - Distance - 35km Vertical metres - 900m

BIMONT bike shop are

happy... Steve's 3 week vacation to the States has resulted in a spending spree in the bike shop in Can Valero... double XL comfort fit jerseys, a step up in bib short padding & a new saddle. The beauty of cycling is that it works for all shapes and sizes - road biking, mountain biking or just riding your bike on one of the many cycle paths in Mallorca. Whether it is a short ride or a long ride, getting out on the bike is a fantastic way to stay healthy. For that reason we felt it was only right that we welcomed Steve back to the group. With a more comfortable saddle and wider tyres, we felt that a short mountain bike ride would be the best thing to get Steve back on track.

For this month's ride I headed out with Steve, Ollie & my old buddy Colin Charvis, who was over working on an event with me. We rented a couple of extra bikes from Tramuntana Tours in Port de Soller (they have an excellent range of

mountain bikes & ebikes). Having wrestled Steve off the ebike and given him the lightest mountain bike they had, we headed out the back of Port de Soller and past the roundabout with the massive Soller Prawn! After about 2 km we turned right and went onto a gravel track. The route was a mixture of single track and wider 4x4 tracks. We nipped on the road through Fornalutx for a bit and then off road up towards the Mirador de ses Barques. Once at the Mirador, we begin our descent into the tranquil Balitx valley, lined with stone terraces of ancient olive trees. We then headed down a dirt track, to the foot of the valley and the old farmhouse Balitx d'Avall, now a working agroturismo. Here, we stop for a freshly squeezed orange juice and are forced to listen to Steve prattle on about his rugby past, in an attempt to try and impress Colin. We then pegged it back up the valley & through Folrnalutx and onto Soller.

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