

### Abstract

Guiding Skills in *Dalt Vila* aims to propose a model for the successful guiding of a tour. To that purpose, the author uses the figure of Bell, an imaginary tour guide, leading a group of British tourists from a cruise ship on a three- to four-hour visit to *Dalt Vila*, Ibiza's old town. The account of the visit goes through a series of points, such as the pre-conditions which must be met by the guide and how to go about the actual guiding, which are key to a successful tour. The article also poses some questions for the reader to consider.

**Keywords:** *Eivissa*– Ibiza, guiding skills, *Dalt Vila* Eivissa – Ibiza; Tour commentary; Excursion

### Resum

Guiding Skills in Dalt Vila (Tècniques de Guia a Dalt Vila) té l'objectiu de proposar un model per a dur a terme amb èxit una visita guiada. Amb aquest propòsit, l'autor utilitza la figura de Bell, una guia turística imaginària, dirigint un grup de turistes britànics arribats en un vaixell de creuer fent una visita de tres a quatre hores a Dalt Vila, el nucli antic d'Eivissa. El relat de la visita passa per una sèrie de punts, com ara les condicions prèvies que ha de complir el guia i com realitzar el guiatge mateix. L'article també planteja al lector algunes qüestions, deixant oberta la resposta.

**Paraules clau:** Eivissa, Tècniques de guia, Dalt Vila - Eivissa , Explicació turística, Excursions

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## Introduction

As a tutor of English IV, I aim to help my students learn how to guide successfully, especially around the *Pitiüses*. Guiding successfully is a complex business. First impressions, the guide's appearance, their voice, friendliness, the quality of the commentary, ... the success depends on countless factors which are not always easy -or even possible- to pin down.

There are, of course, some features which must be present for any venture to succeed, such as energy and enthusiasm, but then there are others as well which are required for this particular job. And that is the object of this article: to identify those features and propose a model for the guide to succeed. The article also poses some questions and invites the reader, or prospective guide, to position themselves.

To that end, I have conjured up an imaginary guide, Bell, conducting a typical excursion.

Bell is around thirty years old. She knows the importance of first impressions, so she's made sure her appearance is appropriate, dressed neither too formal nor too casual, spotlessly clean, discreetly made up. No piercings or tattoos showing.

She's also aware of the magic effect of smiling. *Smile at them, and they'll smile back, and we'll all feel better for it*, Bell often says.

The audience are a group of British visitors to Ibiza Town. They have just arrived on a cruise ship. After getting off the ship, they get on a coach which takes them to the top of *Dalt Vila*, Ibiza's old town. They then walk down through the medieval streets, get some free time, and meet the bus later at the Formentera Maritime Station. The tour starts at 09.30. It is, let us say, a Tuesday in late May.

The clarifications may sound random, but they're not. Consider:

1. A British group is very different from, say, a group from South Africa, or the USA. Even though they are speakers of the same language, their socio-historical context is widely different. A guide's familiarity with their clients' customs is vital (CG. Commisceo Global, 2018) . It is so easy to put your foot in it!
2. Cruise tourists are markedly different from

holidaymakers staying in, say, Santa Eulalia, since they cannot be expected to have the same knowledge of the island, for one thing, so any references to place names will often require an explanation.

3. The fact that it takes place on a Tuesday, for example, and starts at 09.30 hours means that both the cathedral and the Madina Yabisah interpretation centre will be open (the former is open from 10 to 2, the latter is closed on Mondays).
4. The weather in May is usually good enough for a pleasant visit to *Dalt Vila*, but the same cannot be said of July or August.

I quote the guide's commentary word for word, interspersed with explanations, comments and instructions.

A guide's job is to give information and do their best to make sure the clients enjoy the visit (FEG, 2020). That means they need to decide how much information they will give, keeping in mind that a guided tour is not a historical lecture, and nor is the audience a group of historians, which has obvious implications on the information delivered. How to best achieve that aim is the object of this article.

As the reader will see, the guide's words are italicised. The author offers his own comments to explain some aspects of the commentary, or to open them up for debate.

## Preliminaries

Right from the very start, even when she's checking that everyone is happy with the quality of the sound, Bell makes sure she establishes a good rapport with her clients, showing interest in how they are feeling. She's aware of the importance of projecting an agreeable, positive, approachable image.

She double-checks the sound system (McKenzie, 2013). Double-checks because she's already done that prior to the clients boarding the coach. She's also checked how this particular one works and adjusted the volume.

## Introducing the tour

*Good morning, everyone. Did you have a*

*good trip? Can you all hear me loud and clear? Good. First of all, welcome to the island of Ibiza! We'd like to introduce ourselves up here in the front. Our driver's name is Antonio, and my name is Bell. I'm going to be your guide on this tour to Dalt Vila. Yes, Dalt Vila, but don't worry: you're not on the wrong excursion: Dalt Vila is the local name for the old town of Ibiza, the capital of the island. It means Upper Town, obviously because it's at the top of a hill, the hill you can see on your left. Anyway, we'll be walking through the town, visiting the highlights, and I'll be telling you all about it. And if there's anything you feel curious about that I don't mention, all you have to do is ask me, any time you like. After the walk through the town, you'll have some free time to walk around by yourselves, and we'll meet the bus again at 1 p.m. to come back to the ship.*

Bell introduces herself and the tour. She holds the microphone at the correct distance from her mouth, to get the best sound possible, and never too close to the speakers near her, since the feedback produces an ear-splitting howl. As she speaks, she turns around, looking at her audience most of the time. She makes sure the mic does not cover her face, and she sits pretty, so breathing's easy, and her voice sounds its best. (McKenzie, 2013)

## View of Dalt Vila

*If you look to your left, you'll see Ibiza's famous skyline, with the cathedral at the top, the castle right next to it, and the city walls encircling the old town, called Dalt Vila by us locals, which literally means Upper Town. You should know that Ibiza is one of the oldest cities in the Mediterranean. It was founded in 654 BC by the Phoenicians, so it's much older than London, for example, or Barcelona, Madrid, and many others. Through the centuries it has been inhabited by different peoples: Carthaginians, Romans and Moors, among others.*

Bell begins the commentary. *Dalt Vila* in the distance, across the harbour. It's the world-famous panoramic view of Ibiza's old town. She mentions the cathedral, the walls and other landmarks which she'll be explaining again soon,

but it is okay to deal with objects twice or more times, making the explanation more complete each time. The audience like it because it helps them to remember the information.

## Catalan

*The island's name, of course, is Ibiza, but you'll often see the Catalan version of the name: Eivissa. The reason is the island was conquered by the Catalans in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Until not many years ago, that was practically the island's only language. But being part of Spain, the Spanish language has been in use for many years too, and has lately overtaken Catalan in the number of users.*

*So now there are two official languages: Castilian Spanish and Catalan. The two are romance languages, so they have a lot of similarities, just like Portuguese and Italian, for example, two other Romance languages. The road-signs are often in Catalan, but they're easy to understand as the names are very similar to their Spanish translations.*

Catalan is a sensitive subject in Spain, and Bell has her own opinions, but an excursion is not the place to make political statements. Holidaymakers are understandably often averse to the topic, and Bell is aware of it: so a quick mention will do.

## On the way

*Here on your left we can see the Formentera Maritime Station. Take a good look at it, because this is where we shall be meeting again at 1 o'clock to go back to the ship. Formentera, by the way, is our sister island, and also a very popular tourist destination: all sorts of boats take travellers constantly to and fro.*

Bell takes every opportunity to talk about, and point out, places that can be seen from the coach. The coach is not a walled-in auditorium but a vehicle travelling along a huge screen, so to speak, hopefully made interesting by the guide!

As the coach makes its way up Carrer Joan Xicó to the small car park behind Es Soto Fosc, Bell has

a drink of water. She knows a guide's tool is their voice (NIH, 2017), and she takes good care of it. Water is necessary to keep her vocal chords hydrated, and during the stops, she goes easy on caffeine and alcoholic beverages. Needless to say, she does not smoke (NIH, 2017).

## Arrival at Es Soto

*So here we are! We're getting off now, going through a tunnel and up to the cathedral.*

*Feel free to leave your belongings on the coach, they'll be quite safe, as Antonio will be staying here. Please notice our coach is number 51, in case there are other coaches when we get back. The number is clearly visible on the wind-shield and at the back.*

Bell points out the coach number. It is important that people be able to identify their own bus easily. They should also be able to spot their guide easily. Some guides carry a red umbrella, or any object which will be easy to spot from a distance. Bell, personally, does not like that, and prefers to just make sure they're all there when she starts speaking to the group (Manning, 2014).

## At the tunnel's entrance

*Right, everyone. We're standing just outside the impressive fortified walls of Ibiza town. I'll be telling you more about them, but right now we'll be entering the old town by what used to be a secret passage. It's the tunnel called Es Soto Fosc. The old town had two official entrances, of which we'll speak later. But this one is different. As I said, this passage was secret, so to speak. It was built so the town dwellers could sneak out in the event of a siege and surprise the attackers<sup>1</sup>.*

This is an ideal moment to get close to the group. Bell is aware of the importance of body language. She stands facing the group, not facing what she's showing to them, and she leaves no one behind her. If anyone does move behind, she repositions herself to get them back in front.

Upright but relaxed, showing plenty of self-

confidence, making sure she looks at all of them, not just one person.

She moves her hands naturally, just enough to support the commentary, not waving them around madly.

She does not balance on one leg, then another, as a nervous beginner would be apt to do (Tonner, 2016 A).

## A witches' meeting point

*But there's another reason why we stopped here. Tradition has it that this very spot was a popular meeting point for witches. They would meet here at sundown<sup>2</sup>, especially for a plant that grew here before the whole area was covered by concrete. A plant known in Catalan as caramels de bruixa, meaning witch candy, and called White henbane in English. It is, in fact, a potent drug, also known as herba de Santa Maria, St Mary's herb, used by the locals to alleviate a severe toothache<sup>3</sup>, for example. So if an Ibicenco needed to see a witch for whatever reason, like to recover a loving partner, or to get rid of an enemy, they'd come here to procure the services of a witch.*

Bell is knowledgeable and knows everything about the topic (FEG, 2020). She knows that is essential for complete peace of mind. But she also knows to mix the dry facts and stats with traditions, superstition, witches, dark nights. Audiences love that (Anderson, 2008). They suddenly become aware that the place is alive below the cold, grey concrete.

## Through Es Soto Fosc

*Anyway let's go in. As you can see, there was a second door here, about 3 metres into the tunnel. And look up: there's a hole up there, called machicolation, through which the inhabitants of the town used to drop stones or hot oil over any invader who'd managed to break through the first door and was busy trying to knock down the second<sup>4</sup>. Let's go up.*

In Bell's commentary, she displays a rich variety in pitch, volume and rhythm. As she

speaks, her pitch goes up or down as necessary. Her voice sounds louder, or quieter, faster or slower, depending on the effect she wishes to have on the listeners. There's nothing more soporific than a monotonous, robotic speech. (Anderson, 2008)

## Casemates

*Here, half way up through the tunnel, as you can see, there are rooms where they used to keep cannons and ammunition, and if anyone was arrested, he would be locked up here. These rooms are called casemates. Okay let's continue.*



Casemate. Photo: H. Bonet

## St Bernard's bastion

*Mind the step. Now this sort of square here is called a bastion. The city walls were built in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The town's medieval walls, which had been built during the Arab occupation of the island, were no longer appropriate considering how the destructive power of artillery had increased. The Mediterranean was at the time full of dangers for a small island: France, a historic enemy of Spain at the time, had allied itself with the Ottoman empire. Turkish attacks were a regular occurrence, so it was easy to see that Ibiza needed to be protected properly. So Giovanni Battista Calvi, the best engineer at the time, who'd worked in many other places including Gibraltar, was hired to design them<sup>5</sup>.*

*There are seven bastions like this one, each one named after a saint, which is understandable considering how important the protection of the city was. This one is Saint Bernard's Bastion. Others are St George's, St. James', Saint Peter's, St John's, Saint Lucy and St Tecla. From here we can see how the system worked: the novelty of these walls, at the time they were built, were the bastions, which have a sort of pentagonal shape, four of whose sides, the outer sides, were equipped with heavy artillery, so that it was very difficult for the enemy to get close to the walls since they could be shot at from so many different angles<sup>6</sup>. This picture illustrates clearly how the cannons were positioned and the firing range.*

Your clients will appreciate it if you can show them a picture, or anything to illustrate what you are saying. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words. Apart from that, it is a welcome change!

*The perimeter of the walled enclosure is almost 2 kilometres. The walls are very thick. About up to seven meters in some places. They are the best preserved Renaissance walls in Europe. Well, the second, after Valetta in Malta.*

## Sweeping view from St Bernard's bastion

*From here we have an impressive view. In the distance we can see Ibiza's sister island, called Formentera, which is about five times smaller than Ibiza and also very different. Whereas Ibiza is green and hilly, Formentera is flat, dry and rocky, but it's got gorgeous beaches, so it's a very, very popular tourist destination, and it's also very expensive. Between Ibiza and Formentera there's another island called Espalmador, which is the largest of the minor islands around the Pityuses. It's also a private island. A bit closer we can see Hangman's Island<sup>7</sup>, where according to tradition, pirates were hanged when they were caught prowling around our waters. Moving closer, and already on Ibiza's southernmost point, we can see a tower. That's one of the seven watchtowers around*

*Ibiza. That one is very important because it protects the strait between Ibiza and Formentera, which is called Es Freus<sup>8</sup>. Navigation can be tricky there with a rough sea and Formentera is often isolated in winter, as it can only be reached by boat. Moving down along the shore, there's a beach called Es Cavallet. Back in the seventies that was one of the first official nudist beaches. A bit further along we can see another watchtower. That one protected the Salinas, or salt pans<sup>9</sup>, which we can see from here, just next to the airport. The tower is at the end of a long beach, Platja d'en Bossa, which is the longest beach on the island of Ibiza, about 3 kilometres long. Coming up closer there's another beach, Figueretes. And right here, that hill there, called Puig des Molins, is extremely important in the history of the island, as it was the necropolis where the different peoples that have inhabited the island buried their dead.*

## The castle

*Behind you, we can see the castle of Ibiza Town. As far as we know, there's always been a fortress here, right from the time Ibiza was founded, back in 654 BC by the Phoenicians, which makes Ibiza one of the oldest towns in the Mediterranean, as we already mentioned on the coach. The castle we can see now is about 300 years old and it's supposed to become a parador eventually, which is a kind of Spanish hotel housed in historic buildings, such as this one. But work has been going on for ages and ages, and no one is really sure when it will finally be ready.*

*Right here, this tower is called the keep. All old castles had a keep, which was the place where major ceremonies took place, such as official receptions of important visitors, etc. The keep is a little bit higher than the top of that building you can see over there, which is none other than the cathedral. Can anyone tell me how high that is? No, not 500 metres. 150 did you say? Well, that is closer: it's actually 104 meters above sea level, which is the same as about 320 feet.*

Audiences love games (Anderson, 2008). Who can guess the correct answer? The winner always

gets a buzz, and, more importantly, it gives the group cohesion.

Bell can also quickly convert from feet to metres and vice versa. When you deal with clients from English-speaking countries, you need that skill at your fingertips.

*And that house next to it, the red house, was the governor's house during the island's Moorish occupation. The castle, with the keep, and the Governor's house, all this was part of the Moorish Citadel.*

## Sa Penya from St Bernard's bastion

*Let's move over to that side.*

*From here we can see the new port, by a small island with a lighthouse called Botafoç. Yes, I know, it's a name that tends to raise eyebrows among my English-speaking audience, but it's merely a Catalan word that sort of translates as torch. Over there we can see the old fishing quarter, called Sa Penya, meaning The Rock, for, as you can see the houses are built right on top of a rocky headland. As a curiosity, people used to fish for their lunch by simply throwing a line into the sea from their own kitchen windows!*

*Let's go and take a look at the Cathedral now. Walk this way.*



Sa Penya from Sant Bernat Bastion. Photo: H. Bonet

## Cathedral Square: The Cathedral

*We are now standing in the middle of the Cathedral Square, surrounded by historic buildings.*

*Right in front of us is the cathedral, the building of which began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when Ibiza was conquered by the Christians, or re-conquered, as they'd been here before the Moors came, which was about 900 AD. The conquerors made a promise on their way to the conquest: if they were successful, they would build a temple and dedicate it to Saint Mary. So that's what they did, the building work lasted well into the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and was dedicated to Santa María de las Nieves, or St. Mary of the Snows. The name may sound surprising because snow is not something we have too much of around here, but the thing is the reconquest was completed on the 8th of August, 1235, so they just took, of all the days dedicated to Saint Mary on the calendar, the one that was closest to the day of the conquest: St Mary of the Snows, celebrated on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August. The church was built, as was to be expected, in early Catalan Gothic style, which is more sober and austere than your usual Gothic. Most of it was restored in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Baroque style, but we can still see Gothic elements in the bell tower. Notice the arches, for example. There's also the remains of a rose window over there, can you see it?*

*The big round stone by the door marks the place as a sanctuary, which means it was a place where anyone would be protected, even if he was the worst criminal, and couldn't be touched once he'd made it inside.*

*Well, the cathedral is closed now, so we can't go in. But you're not missing so much anyway, because most of the inside was destroyed in 1936 during the Spanish Civil War. So most of the things you can see inside are quite new, and not that interesting.*

It is one of the essential tasks of a guide to organise the stops beforehand. Thus, she needs to make sure an attraction, like a church or a shop, will be open and available at the time she has scheduled the visit. It can happen, however, that for any unforeseen circumstance, it is not. Should that happen, the guide must do her best to prevent the clients from feeling frustrated, even if that means downplaying the value of the attraction, as Bell does in this case (Manning, 2014).

## Cathedral Square buildings

Before she starts, she makes sure everyone's there.

*But let's have a good look at the buildings around the square. To the right is the entrance to the castle, which was restored about 30 years ago by reputedly the best of the local architects, Elias Torres. There was great controversy about it because it's rather different from the original. Some people say it's a work of art, others say it's rubbish. What do you think?*

Bell is not exactly sure when it was restored, but there's really no necessity to provide absolutely exact information. It even gives it a warmer, more human touch.

Bell asks her clients' opinion. Getting them involved is important as it keeps them actively interested. It also makes them feel good because their opinion counts.

*Further to the right we see the stairs leading up to the Bishop's Palace, where he actually lives. And there on the right we see the Cúria house, which housed the religious Courthouse, where the church kept any documents, etc. So if you were accused of blasphemy, or of being a heretic, that's where you'd be tried by the Inquisition before they burnt you at the stake.*

It is possible that people were burnt at the stake in Ibiza. Maybe even likely. Bell is not sure. But the audience quite like a bit of tragedy. Is it okay to use *special effects* when you don't have proof that a specific event took place?

*The square has other historic gems as well. This was the place where slaves were bought and sold, auctioned, etc. And this building here used to house the University, which was the name of the island's government. Next to it, the fishermen's main brotherhood. Both buildings now house a museum which was closed for restoration about 10 years ago, and which will open again one day, but just don't ask me when. Come now and let's have a look at the fantastic view of the island's capital.*

## Cathedral Square viewpoint

*Do you remember how many bastions there were? That's correct: seven! That one there is the largest. It's called Saint Lucy's.*

Were the clients listening? Test their memory! (Anderson, 2008). They love it when they can prove to you that they were!

*The old town was all within the walls and houses were built outside the walls only when it became quite safe there. You can see how the town grew beyond St Lucy's Bastion. There's Sa Penya, the oldest part of the fishing quarter, and the town grew westwards. You can see the progression clearly, from oldest on the right, to newest on the left. There's Sa Penya, La Marina, L'Eixample, meaning new town. On the other side of the harbour there's the famous Pachá and other clubs and lots of new buildings. Property is very expensive there. Just behind it, there's quite a large area called Ses Feixes, which until a mere two generations ago was agriculturally very rich and boasted an irrigation system devised by the Moors.*

*Now this area here has the houses where the most important families used to live, the families of the conquerors, and architecturally the most interesting houses, with Gothic elements. We'll see them as we go down that street.*

## Inside the cathedral

*Oh look! they've just opened the cathedral! Let's go take a look.*

When she sees the cathedral being opened, Bell changes her tune right away, and suddenly the cathedral is well worth a visit! Though she makes sure her change of tune is not too obvious, of course!

*So what have we got here? A statue of the body of the dead Christ in the tomb. On the wall, a slab with a long list of names which corresponds to the victims of a slaughter that took place in the castle in 1936, at the start of the Spanish Civil War. Those on the list are all obviously from the nationalist side, the side that won and which the church sided with. The statue of St Mary there in the middle is*

*from after the war. The old one was destroyed by anticlerical factions, as were many other works of art: paintings, altarpieces, etc. That one there is the most valuable. It's from the 18<sup>th</sup> century? and that one there tells a funny story: it's a painting of Saint Anthony, and the author a local painter called Narcís Puget, painted his own face in place of the saint's. No one knew this until it was unveiled, with all the pomp and ceremony. When the painter saw all the questioning looks, he adamantly denied what was obvious to everyone.*

*The ceiling is from the 18<sup>th</sup> century restoration. There's a museum in the sacristy, displaying various outfits from different bishops, and especially a silver chancel from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which is the jewel of the cathedral.*

Should you talk about something that the group won't see? The chancel is in the Cathedral museum, which you have to pay for to see. It would be highly inconvenient should anyone express their wish to have a look. The question is open to debate.

*Okay, let's move on.*

The group leaves the cathedral and makes its way down Carrer Major. As they pass the Madina Interpretation Centre, Bell suggests a brief visit.

*As we have time, maybe we'll just go into the Curia House where there's an interpretation Centre. Yeah, why don't we? Apart from the loos, you can see some exhibits from the time the walls were built. You can also see the walls' foundations, and there's a very illustrative video contextualizing the building of the walls. People often ask me where all the stones came from for the building of the walls. The short answer is from all over the place: from quarries along the shore, from island's fields, brought over and sold by the farmers, some were even shipped over from Mallorca! As for the men that built them, they were mostly locals.*

## Carrer Major

*Now let's go down Carrer Major, meaning High Street. Notice the windows. The houses*



*are quite distinguished, aristocratic, here. They were the first houses built after the Reconquest, and they belonged to the most influential families of the time.*

*At the end of this alley is sa Portella, which was the main gate through the Moorish walls. The medieval walls were made up of three enclosures. Here is a drawing to give you an idea of what it was like.*

Bell shows an illustration he carries with her. The clients appreciate it if they're shown the complete picture.

*If the enemy managed to break into one enclosure, they'd all move into the second one and so on. This was the gate they went through to go to the harbour.*

*Let's move on down the street. The price of property all around here is very high, no matter what condition the building is in.*

*Here we can see the most impressive of all the houses in Dalt Vila. It's called Can Comasema, from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It now houses a museum, Museum Puget. Puget was one of our most outstanding painters in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His son did watercolours. Let's continue.*

## The accident

*Watch your step now, because it's pretty slip... oh no! You've twisted your ankle, haven't you?*

A lady has twisted her ankle. Bell knows a guide is there to do their best to make sure the client enjoys the tour. As she should do, she shows interest in the lady's welfare, displaying empathy and reassuring her: everything is going to be alright (Tonner, 2016 B).

*Are you alright? Are you sure? Can you walk? That 's right, if you can hold on to your husband's arm, we'll walk more slowly, and see how it goes. Let's hope it's nothing.*

## St Cyriac's shrine

*This shrine marks a very important spot in the history of our Island. It is dedicated to Saint Cyriac. The Moorish town finally fell to the Christian forces on 8th August 1235, and that's the day of Saint Cyriac, so that's when we celebrate the Reconquest. On the wall we can see a painting of the saint. Right underneath there's an altar, and just under the altar we can see a hole in the wall. According to tradition, that's the hole through which the first Christian troops came into the Moorish town. It is believed that this was the house of the Moorish Governor's brother. Now, he had a very attractive harem, and the governor enjoyed paying a visit now and then. And it so happened that he fell in love with one of the girls in the harem, who, to make matters worse, happened to be one of his brother's favourites. Well, he was the governor, wasn't he, so what do you expect, he just took her for himself! That was the way things worked, and there was nothing he could do about it.*

*While this was happening, the Christian troops were poised outside the walls, ready to pounce, so people had other things to worry about, and had no time for this sort of intrigue. But the brother was absolutely furious, so he didn't think twice about it, and he betrayed not only his brother, but his own people: he opened his window and let the invader through it into his own town. That, ladies and gentlemen, is more or less what the legend tells us. So, no, please do NOT say it's always money or women, as some are inclined to comment, because she did nothing she can be blamed for!*

Two aspects of the commentary beg for discussion at this point: Bell feels free to interpret the legend. Did the governor really have a very attractive harem? Did he really enjoy paying a visit now and then? Did he really fall in love with her? And so on and so forth. It might be argued that Bell has no right to interpret the legend her own way, but ... why not? This is not a historical account for an encyclopaedia after all.

And then there's humour, always a temptation. The effect is very positive, since it makes the occasion brighter, happier, more cheerful! However, one does need to be extremely careful because you always run the risk of offending someone, since jokes often target minorities. Bell

makes an innocent joke simply by anticipating a sexist joke that might be offensive to women.

## The state of religion

*We are now standing outside the Seminary. Actually, a former seminary. From this point, you can appreciate how the island's relationship with religion has evolved throughout the last hundred years.*

**One:** *over there we can see a nunnery of cloistered Augustinian nuns. It's been there for over 400 years (1600) but, like a lot of our priests, the nuns there are a recent import from South America.*

**Two:** *Down there we can see a 14<sup>th</sup> c. church that looks very much like the churches you see in the countryside, scattered all over the island. It is the former church of L'Hospitalet, meaning the Hospital church, because it used to be next to a hospital that was relocated in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. There was also a brotherhood there, Ecce Homo, which accompanied to the gallows those who were about to be executed. Anyway, halfway through the 20<sup>th</sup> c. it stopped being used as a church, and for a time it was even an art gallery. It is now used by the island's orthodox community.*

**And three:** *this building here, known as the Seminary, and which accommodated the Jesuits for a few years in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, no longer contains a religious school but tourist apartments. So there you go: 50 years ago, if you wanted to become a priest, this is where you came to study, but I'm afraid vocation has been at an all-time low for quite some time now, so it was decided to find a more profitable use for it.*

The whole commentary here has humorous undertones. Religion is a very sensitive issue. Could Bell's comments offend anyone? Does she sound respectful enough? What do you think?

## The question. Client types

*Does anyone have any questions? Yes, madam. Oh, you'd like to know how many*

*people were executed. I must admit I don't have that information. But ... sorry? Why they were executed, you're asking? Well, mostly it was for crimes committed, like murdering someone. For political reasons, you ask? Probably, but I'm afraid I'll need to do some research to answer that question, madam, if you really want to know.*

There are times when the guide is asked a question that she can't answer. Hopefully, by the time that happens, she will already have projected an image of unquestionable self-confidence. She will not lose control, and she will not fly into a panic. She'll be able to react as one should, using her head. There's no reason why a guide should not admit that she does not possess that information.

In any case, Bell is not caught off her guard. She has worked with all kinds of clients. Apart from the regular, run-of-the-mill client, and those with unquenchable thirst for knowledge, she is ready for know-it-alls, others who don't care what you tell them because they're just not interested. Then there are those who just want to prove that they know better than the guide, others who she knows will arrive late after each stop, ... it's a long list.

## Town hall

*We are now standing outside the town hall . Right opposite we can see a tunnel. This was actually an air raid shelter built during the Civil War. The town hall was part of a large complex that belonged to the Church until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it was taken over by the State. The Church was allowed to keep the church building itself, but the rest of the property was confiscated. Apart from the Town Hall, it housed the island's only high school until the 1950s. It was also even a prison! The prison was also popularly known as Hotel Naranjo, meaning the Orange Tree Hotel, because there was an orange tree growing in the middle of the courtyard. It was not a very secure jail. Once, in the 70s, I was told two prisoners got out. But they left a note that read haven't escaped, just gone out for a drink. back later and believe it or not, they did get back! Soon after that, a more serious jail was built outside the town.*

Bell is now standing in front of her group, with the sun in her eyes. She's sometimes tempted to reach for her sunglasses, but she knows she mustn't. Her clients want to see her eyes, not two big black shields covering them. Sunglasses, like it or not, have a chilling effect in the rapport which a guide should attempt to create between him or herself and the client. In any case, after a moment she moves slightly to the left, where her head is now in the shade (Manning, 2014).

## Montgrí statue

*And here we have a beautiful view. This is called El Mirador, which means the viewpoint. We can see the fishing quarter from here, the new port on the other side and here we have a statue of Guillem de Montgrí. Now this guy was the man who organized the reconquest of the island, back in the year ... does anybody remember the year? Yeah, absolutely! You remember! 1235! He was the Archbishop of Tarragona. Funny to think that back in those days archbishops had armies! Anyway, he was joined by Peter, the Crown Prince of Portugal and Nunó Sanç, the Count of Roussillon. Each brought his own troops. The reconquest took about five or six weeks. Once they had reconquered the island they divided it into four quarters, of which Guillem de Montgrí took two because he had contributed as many troops as the other two combined, and the other got two one each. The four quarters are the basis for today's division of the island into municipalities.*



Montgrí statue. Photo: H. Bonet

At this point, Bell used to give details of how the island was divided: how Montgrí got *Algarb*, which contained the salt pans, and *Balansat*, and *Nunó Sanç* got *Portmany*, and so on and so forth, but the faces of her audience quickly led her to

realize that she was providing too much information. A guide must be sensitive to that (Anderson, 2008). Anyone interested in details would no doubt let her know. Very rarely the case.

*The statue you see here is a reproduction of the original sarcophagus of Guillem de Montgrí in Girona. It was brought to Ibiza in 1970, with all the pomp and ceremony, to commemorate the 735th anniversary of the conquest. The nose is missing because for a while a rumour circulated that if you touched its nose you'd have a happy holiday, so for a while the nose was just shiny, but I guess one day one of our visitors wanted to make sure they had a really good holiday, so they just took it off for themselves! Let's go down to Saint Lucy's Bastion.*

## Saint Lucy's Bastion

*The houses you see from here were built after people started building outside the walls because it was already kind of safe to do so. This is Sa Penya, the fishing quarter up until the 70s, when the fishing port was moved to the other side of the harbour, so the fishermen gradually moved out too. This then became a rather conflictive area, with quite a few social problems, including squatting, drug dealing and poor sanitary standards.*

*The house you see here was a munitions dump after the walls were built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but in September 1730 it was hit by lightning. The blast, which killed 15 and wounded many, did extensive damage to the Church of Sant Domingo there. When we locals want to say that something is very old, we say oh that's older than l'any d'es tró, which means the year of the blast.*

*And there we can see some replicas of the cannons that were placed here to protect the main entrance to the town. Here you can appreciate clearly the advantage of having bastions to defend the town.*

*Let's go down.*

There are a lot of factors that can spoil a commentary: short sentences uttered one after the other with no connectors, a boring intonation,

dry, unpalatable facts and stats. Bell's had quite a bit of training, and know what rules to follow:

1. She involves the audience, as we've seen above, addresses them directly (*As you can see, ...*)
2. she often offers her own opinion,
3. she sprinkles her commentary with just the right amount of humour,
4. her sentences are not too long or complicated, so the flow is easy to follow. But at the same time, she makes a point of making a good use of connectors (because, when, so, then, apart from that, etc.), and her speech is syntactically rich, with subordinate clauses (*... , which killed 15 and wounded many, ...*). Thus, the text shows good organisation and cohesion, and a smart choice of vocabulary, both of which aspects are vital to make the commentary a pleasure to listen to (FEG, 2020).

## Macabich statue

*Now this here is the statue of a very popular man called Macabich. He was a priest whose life spanned most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A local intellectual who wrote the first serious history of the island, he also collected traditional songs, tales, poems, ... Macabich was the municipal archivist and there are two reasons why his statue was placed here and not anywhere else. One is that he lived there, opposite the Church of Santo Domingo, and he'd often walk past here. And another reason is that one of the poems he wrote was called The Eucalyptus, and it referred to this one in particular. It's traditional to have your photo taken here sitting next to him. By the way, he used to wear glasses, but somebody nicked them.*

*Let's go down.*



Macabich statue under the eucalyptus. Photo: H. Bonet

## Gargoyle

*Notice this kind of gargoyle up here. It represents the Phoenician god Bes, adopted by the Phoenicians, after whom the island is named. Bes was the god of fun and merriment, as well as household protector and a fighter against all sorts of evil, including snakes. As a matter of fact, the reason the Phoenicians named Ibiza after him was the fact that this was a snake-free island back in the days when they arrived.*

## Plaça de Vila

*And this is Plaça de Vila, the first market square in the history of Christian Ibiza. Remember that first it was the Cathedral Square, then, as the town moved down, it was here. It is also called Plaça de sa Ferreria, Blacksmith Square, as it's where blacksmiths tended to cluster. The square could be called Restaurant Square now, as it is full of restaurants, some of them offering very good quality fare, but just in summer, because they all close at the end of the season. If you're interested, do reserve a table beforehand because they're always full to capacity.*

*We are now going to go into the Armoury Court. Notice the coat of arms up there representing the Crown of Aragon, which Ibiza was part of at the time the walls were built. And a statue here on the right adorning the entrance to the armoury court.*

Guiding takes a lot out of you. It requires a lot of energy, and it sometimes leaves you drained. Burnout is a definite danger. When you've been guiding for a few years, your enthusiasm is not what it used to be. How do you avoid burnout? What does Bell do about it?

If you ask her that question, she'll tell you that the first thing is always to be yourself, never to pretend. Listen to yourself and be honest! Don't make a joke when you don't feel like making it. Make changes to your commentary, get out of your routine. Lead a different tour.

And when your schedule allows it, go for a walk. Work less. Do make an effort to relax. Take a sauna, do breathing and relaxation exercises. Keep away from alcohol and coffee. Eat well, not too many calories, and, though it goes without saying, don't smoke. Exercise, take your time to do what you like. And whatever you do, sleep your hours (Tonner, 2015).

## Armoury court / Hippies

*Let's go in. Under the arches was the island's first hippie market ever. Back at the end of the 60s the hippies were the first ones that made Ibiza famous. In those days the USA was at war in Vietnam. Many Americans left the US so as to dodge the draft and came to the old continent.*

*For some reason the hippies loved Ibiza. Why? Maybe the island was more tolerant than other places, after having been occupied by so many different peoples and cultures. And with this movement started a whole new philosophy that rejected the modern, artificial, plastic lifestyle, and advocated instead a return to mother nature, adopting natural alternatives. Ibiza happened to represent all that. Our farmers were self-sufficient: each farmer was a builder, as they built their own houses, a carpenter because they made their own furniture, a farmer, with his own livestock from which they got not only meat for their Sunday meals, but also leather, and wool to make their clothes with. Each farmer was a doctor, since they had their own ways of dealing with illness. In short, for them Ibiza was just paradise. So they stayed on the island. Eventually a so-called hippy market developed near the beach of Es Canar which*

*you've probably heard of, really popular, but the one here was the first hippie market of them all.*



Armory court. Photo: H. Bonet

*Notice the beautiful balcony up there, which looks like the balcony where Romeo might have courted Juliet, but it's actually the balcony outside the room where the guards rested before they went on duty.*

*Look at the doors: sturdy, strong, heavy, ages old. And there, look, that was a fireplace. There the guards sat around the fire in winter, watching the door to keep an eye on who came in and who went out.*

*Until recently, anyone coming from the countryside intending to sell their ware inside the citadel, had to pay a tax right here, before entering the town.*

*We are now about to leave the town's walled enclosure.*

## Portal de Ses Taules

*This entrance is called Portal de Ses Taules, meaning Gate of the Planks, a reference to the old drawbridge just out here. It is the main entrance to the Old Town, built to signal the end of the construction of the fortified walls in the year 1585, even though they were not quite finished. Notice the beautiful coat of arms, and the Roman statues on either side of the door. They are actually copies of the original statues, which were found when the foundations were dug for the construction of the walls and are stored in the museum. The*

walls were built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Now how long do you think it took to build them? No, not a hundred years. Not twenty. Did you say thirty? Yeah! Thirty-one, actually!

The building started in 1554 and was considered finished in 1585. They are the second best preserved in Europe -the best-preserved are in the Maltese capital of Valletta. The walls were designed by an Italian engineer called Calvi. He designed the first part of the walls, but halfway through the construction, he died and was replaced by another Italian known as El Frati, who enlarged the enclosure because the town had grown, among other changes. The building of the walls was ordered by king Charles I of Spain. The reason was at the time the Ottoman Empire was very strong and had teamed up with France. So Ibiza was generally perceived to be a weak point, and proper defences were needed. When Charles I died, his son Philip II was the one who oversaw the second phase of the works. The coat of arms shows the different parts of the Spanish Empire at the time, including Austria, Flanders, Portugal and Sicily. There's a plaque over there showing the meaning of each badge contained in the coat of arms so I won't go into that.

By this time, the clients will appreciate it if the guide does not go into too much detail: it's a long tour, and there's so much to take in! Anyone truly interested can just take a good look at the explanatory panel. Most of them are already looking forward to a cold beer.

The doors were closed at night so you couldn't get in after the sun went down. Back in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the sea reached all the way to the bottom of the walls, but now what we see down there is the old market. That was market square number three in our history, and the first one outside the walls. It was built in 1872 right where the peasants used to congregate when they came into town to sell their produce.

As I said before, the town grew from east to west, so the older houses are on our right and the newer houses to the left. The old fishing quarter, which, as you'll remember, was called Sa Penya, meaning the Rock, is there on your left, and this part here is called La Marina.

When pointing things out, the guide must take care to use her listeners as a reference: so she'll say "on your right", rather than "on the left", meaning her own left hand side.

## Last stage

*Right, so let's go down now. Your free time starts now. You can come with me if you like. I'm going straight to the port, which is just behind those buildings over there. From there, I can show you where the Formentera Maritime Station is, where you need to go to meet the coach again. Or if you prefer, you can just go your own way. Plenty of shops around here, plenty of nice terraces where you can get a coffee and perhaps an ensaimada, which is a typical pastry. If you'd like to celebrate that you're having a happy day, then how about a little glass of hierbas, which is the local liqueur. You should also use the toilet here, because there public facilities are practically non-existent in Ibiza. Anyway, if you have any questions, if there's anything you'd like to ask me, just stay for a moment and you can ask me. And if you have no questions, then we'll see you at the bus at 1 o'clock!*

Of course, it is vital that the clients have a clear idea of where they're supposed to meet the guide again. She knows to offer some recommendations, perhaps a local drink, or a traditional snack. Some suggestions of things to do. And important practical information such as where to find a restroom.

So that's what Bell's tour of *Dalt Vila* would look like. But of course, that's not the end of it. *You can always get better*, she says. *There's always something to correct, something to add, something to change to make it better.*

So check how you work! Be sensitive to any feedback you get. Perhaps, now and then, get someone to film you as you work. Watch the footage carefully, listen to your voice. Does it sound right? Is your intonation correct? Is your body language appropriate? Do you have the right attitude, and the right style? Do you look professional? Are you relating to the clients as you should? Could the commentary be improved, especially if you're speaking a foreign language? What general impression do you get? Yes, there's always room for improvement. Work on it: it'll

keep you busy and help to save you from burnout.

## Conclusions

The statement made in *Guiding Skills ...* is that, providing a tour is well put together, well organised, and not too long nor too short, for an excursion to be successful, the guide, as Bell exemplifies, must meet certain pre-conditions.

She must have certain **qualities**, namely:

**PERSONAL:** Besides being an energetic and enthusiastic sort of person, she must also enjoy guiding. She needs to be (and act!) honest, self-confident, organised and experienced (or to have undergone rigorous training). The guide must have positive feelings towards what she's showing, and be willing to always keep learning and improving.

**PEOPLE FOCUSED:** The guide must be a sociable and friendly type of person who enjoys working with people. She must be quick and resourceful enough to deal with any unexpected circumstances successfully. She must also possess group dynamics skills, which includes the ability to lead groups outdoors. A tour leader must be sensitive as to the needs and feelings of her group and of individual clients (e.g. know how much information to give, not too little, not too much).

The guide must also have these **skills**:

She must have in-depth knowledge of the area, including updated practical information (such as opening times, prices, latest developments, etc.), and be well acquainted with the culture of the people she works with. It is, needless to say, vital that she be proficient in the language of the group, and that she be in possession of **public speaking** skills, which implies having the ability to present the information in a way that will entertain / interest the clients.

## Notes

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[7] The island's Catalan name is actually *Illa des Penjats*, meaning island of the hanged. But it is commonly referred to by a more evocative, and more elegant, *Hangman's Island*, by the English-speaking guides on the island (author's note).

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