

PortAventura Dreams, a ground-breaking initiative in Europe, opens its doors and welcomes its first families



- The project promotes the value of leisure and family bonding as part of recovery therapy.
- PortAventura Dreams, which will welcome about 200 families from all over Spain in 2020, is a unique space designed for families to enjoy a free six-day stay full of excitement and activities.
- The initiative also includes top-level allies such as leading children's hospitals in Spain, private companies and other foundations.

PortAventura World, 22 October 2019 – Today, PortAventura Dreams opens its doors to receive the first families. The village, which plans to welcome 200 families every year, is located within the PortAventura World resort and seeks to offer a unique experience to children and young people suffering from serious illnesses and their families.

With an **investment of more than 4 million Euros**, PortAventura Dreams is a unique recreational area, but it is also an emotional space, designed to **positively impact, from a psychological viewpoint, the fight against illness** and simultaneously **create time for family bonding**.

“At PortAventura World, we want to bring real value to society and our environment. Our actions as a social lever act as tools to bring together all of the company’s needs for change and sustainability. Today, the PortAventura Dreams project is launched as a reflection of our values”, added **Arturo Mas-Sardá**, President of PortAventura World.



The village, a unique space to be together

The village, with a surface area of 8,850 m², consists of **six houses with an area of 135 m², play areas, a football pitch, gardens that surround the entire environment, and a restaurant** serving meals to the families, as well as a multi-purpose room where **volunteers of Fundació PortAventura** will plan the schedule of activities and workshops for all of the families. The village, which is receiving its first guests on 22 October, is expected to welcome around **200 families every year from all over Spain**, a figure that will grow over time.

A leading social project in Europe

The project focuses on children and young people aged 4 - 17 years old who suffer (or have suffered) from serious illnesses, included on the list drawn up by the Spanish Department of Health. The families are selected by a committee made up of doctors, social workers and other health care experts.

The families will enjoy a **six-day stay completely free of charge**. As well as accommodation in one of the houses, the package includes **access to PortAventura World’s three parks and exclusive activities within the village**.

A network of top-level allies

In order to develop this initiative, Fundació PortAventura is supported by **a network of partners**: private companies, other foundations and, mainly, hospitals. Leading mother and child hospitals in Spain such as the **Niño Jesús Children’s University Hospital in Madrid, Sant Joan de Déu Hospital and Vall d’Hebron Hospital**, together with the **Red Cross**, are involved in the project.

“We are delighted to be a part of this project. The PortAventura Dreams initiative is vital as it allows us to integrate recreational activities into the treatment process, helping to lift the child’s spirits in the final part of the treatment. In addition, the aim is that this week will give family units a chance to come together again after having spent time apart as a result of long hospital stays”, added **César Gómez, Director of the Niño Jesús Hospital in Madrid.**

The project is also supported by **founding donors** whose contributions are making PortAventura Dreams a reality: **El Corte Inglés, Barça Foundation, Cruyff Foundation, “la Caixa” Foundation, LaLiga Foundation, Probitas Foundation, LG, Mango and Mediapro.** The aim is, in the future, to grow this network of partners even more.

LaLiga Foundation also participates in the project through a partnership agreement to develop different initiatives that will bring sports and leisure to vulnerable young people in the Village facilities. “We are very excited about this wonderful project that we started with Fundació PortAventura in which we combine our efforts and synergies to promote social inclusion”, said **Olga de la Fuente, Director of the LaLiga Foundation.**

The value of leisure as a part of recovery therapy

The objective of the project, designed to be a unique recreational space, is to **have a positive impact on recovery from a psychological point of view**, whilst **creating new opportunities for family bonding.**

For this reason, and with the aim of scientifically confirming the benefits of leisure in health, Vall d’Hebron Hospital will carry out a **pioneering psychological study** that will try to measure the **impact of a play therapy experience, outside the hospital environment, on the emotional wellbeing** of ill children toward the end of their treatment and that of their relatives. The study starts with the arrival of the first families in the village.

“There is little research on the impact of brief interventions that combine recreational and therapeutic aspects on the wellbeing of children with serious illnesses and that of their families. This pilot study will allow us to measure these aspects, expand scientific knowledge and define new action strategies aimed at improving the quality of life of patients with chronic diseases and that of their families”, explained **Dr. Josep Antoni Ramos Quiroga, Head of the Psychiatric Department at Vall d’Hebron University Hospital.**

The commitment of Fundació PortAventura

Since 2011, the foundation has worked with 814 related organisations and has given out **aid worth 6,300,000 Euros** through numerous projects. In addition, over these years, more than **68,000 children and young people** at risk of exclusion have benefited from the various programmes.

“The arrival of PortAventura Dreams allows us to continue to generate real value for society. We are convinced that the project will have a very positive effect on the lives of many families”, commented **Ramón Marsal**, President of Fundació PortAventura.

Fundació PortAventura channels and promotes PortAventura World’s social actions, the backbone of the company’s global Corporate Responsibility strategy focused on the permanent search for economic, social and environmental balance.

About Fundació PortAventura

The Foundation, which continues the work of PortAventura in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility, was founded in 2011 and focuses its efforts on supporting projects dedicated to local children and young people at risk of social exclusion due to health or economic reasons.

<https://www.fundacioportaventura.org/en/dreams.asp>

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