



## Article

# Gentrification on the Move. New Dynamics in Spanish Mature Urban-Tourist Neighborhoods

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**Abstract:** Mature tourism neighborhoods are a valuable laboratory for the study of socio-urban processes. In them, it is possible to analyze the urban transformations and social changes linked to tourism cycles: those corresponding to the stage of tourism involvement, development, and consolidation; those of stagnation and urban decline; and those of tourism rejuvenation and urban rehabilitation. Currently, there are indications of a fourth cycle, where vacation rentals and the arrival of new groups of foreigners are causing a tourism gentrification process. In this context, the aim of this work is to study the socio-urban transformations of two mature tourism neighborhoods in Palma (El Terreno) and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Santa Catalina-Canteras) and detect this tourism gentrification process. The analysis is based on indicators of resident population (total population and foreigners by nationalities), housing (holiday rental market and real estate market), and socio-economic levels (income), which allows us to detect the existence of a new urban-tourism cycle. This, supported by strong investments associated with rehabilitation plans, is producing the substitution of foreigners from the South for those from the North, changing from residential rental to vacation rentals, in a context of elitization.

**Keywords:** tourist gentrification; real estate market; international migrations; tourist rejuvenation; urban inequality



**Citation:** Domínguez-Mujica, J.; González-Pérez, J.M.; Parreño-Castellano, J.M.; Sánchez-Aguilera, D. Gentrification on the Move. New Dynamics in Spanish Mature Urban-Tourist Neighborhoods. *Urban Sci.* **2021**, *5*, 33. <https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci5010033>

Received: 21 January 2021

Accepted: 12 March 2021

Published: 17 March 2021

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## 1. Introduction: Tourism Development from an Urban Perspective

The capitals of Mallorca and Gran Canaria are island cities that have developed an early tourist activity since the late nineteenth century. From the fifties of the twentieth century, they responded to mass tourism, increasing their hotel and extrahotel offer in certain neighborhoods like El Terreno, in Palma, and Santa Catalina-Canteras, in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. As tourism activity gained importance in other locations of the respective islands, investments in these urban sectors were reduced, and the accommodation infrastructure began to deteriorate. “The elite tourism of the first stage gave way to a mass tourism in the fifties and sixties and to a situation of deep crisis and reconversion since the mid-seventies” [1] (p. 16).

The post-Fordist restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s contributed to the decline of these neighborhoods from the perspective of leisure exploitation and it had important implications for the residential offer. The real estate market revalued some properties of old tourist use, reconverting them into housing, especially those on the seafront, while putting into circulation some of those already obsolescent, for the non-tourist rental market.

From the mid-1990s onwards, a part of the rental housing was occupied by low-income labor immigrants. Therefore, the urban-tourist situation of both neighborhoods showed their uncertain adaptation to the post-Fordist model, with a growing ethnicization, in a

degraded real estate context, despite the administrative initiatives undertaken to improve the public space.

The decline continued well into the 21st century due to the impact of the 2008 economic crisis and onwards. Therefore, the urban-tourist offer was made up of main homes, typical of consolidated neighborhoods; rental homes, of poor quality, which came mostly from the residential reconversion of old tourist properties; smaller tourist establishments; and some large capacity four- and five-star hotels, and some others of lesser size and condition.

However, in the last seven or eight years, a process of real estate revaluation has been unleashed. Different agents in the tourism and financial real estate markets as well as companies in the so-called collaborative economy have begun to operate in the tourism rental market because of business opportunities and new acquisition strategies [2]. This process is bringing about definitive changes in the housing infrastructure of these neighborhoods, contributing to the reduction of the number of homes and displacing low-income population groups in favor of residents with higher incomes. Namely, a process of elitization develops, as considered by authors such as Lees, Shin, and López-Morales, [3] who define gentrification as a social substitution in the urban space through which the population of an area or neighborhood is displaced and replaced by another one with higher purchasing power. In general, this is the result of the revaluation of the property prices and rents that exceed the residents' income.

Consequently, in these areas an initial stage of new construction and first cycle of use, with housing value rising, may be observed. In the second stage, the depreciation of the properties begins, partially and temporarily avoided by investment in rehabilitation or by changes in the market structure. If the process of loss of value continues, the decline is exacerbated by the sale or rent of properties to increasingly less wealthy social groups. This sometimes leads to a process of social substitution, including changes in the composition of the population by ethnicity or nationality, and precedes the gentrification dynamics, when optimal market conditions for a revaluation to begin are observed [4]. The change in market conditions might be favored by public action, the so-called state-led gentrification [5], or be a consequence of the acquisition strategies of real estate or financial market agents. In any case, this process takes place when market circumstances are such that the rehabilitated or renovated properties allow for a profit margin (rent gap) [6]. In the cases analyzed, tourism and gentrification are mutually reinforcing [7].

### *1.1. Urban-Tourist Dynamics from the TALC Model*

The evolution we have been describing can be contextualized within a neighborhood life cycle and interpreted considering the model that Butler called TALC (tourism area life cycle) [8]. This model studies the evolution of tourism from the economic, social, and cultural point of view and analyzes its territorial development through four tourism peripheries: The North Sea and Baltic coasts, Southern Europe, the North African shores, and the tropical oceans [9,10]. The defense of this model turned Butler's work [11] into one of the most cited works on tourism in the world, if not the most cited [12], and soon after its publication arose criticism [13,14], especially that of the undertheorization of tourism [15].

Despite this, four decades after its appearance, its relevance is undoubted and has demonstrated its potential applications in future scenarios [16], given that the TALC remains a clear indicator of the importance of theory in tourism research [17]. Thus, for Oppermann and Agarwal [18], Butler's model is an example of how scientific progress should work, with the ability to adapt to different contexts and to specific situations and circumstances. This has given it great success, based on its apparent universality, its high degree of applicability [19], and, combined with this, the relative absence of alternative models [16,20].

According to TALC, tourist destinations have a dynamic nature, going through different phases of evolution and, as in the biological/product life cycle, decline is often inevitable [12]. Consequently, the last stage foreseen is the rejuvenation or decline of a destination. This interpretation, which has given rise to numerous controversies [21,22],

may be useful as a descriptive model to analyze the first phases of transformation of the El Terreno and Santa Catalina-Canteras neighborhoods. However, as many authors have pointed out, the model does not explain and predict the behavior of a specific tourist destination after the phase of stagnation [23], since “depending on the efforts of government and entrepreneurship, rejuvenation, stagnation, or decline are possible outcomes” [24]. This does not prevent the model from interpreting some of the rejuvenation plans and policies of mature destinations [19].

In hindsight, Butler [25] defends a blending of both evolutionary and revolutionary predictions in the case of tourism destinations, an approach that allows for the incorporation of ideas such as chaos theory and chance into the equation of growth, to reflect both the inertia and dynamism that are inherent to tourism. This is a dynamic and predictive model that can incorporate agents, phases, and processes. For example, once the maturity stage is reached, Strapp [26] explains the conversion of conventional tourist destinations from second homes to retirement havens, while Baum [27] says that, alternatively, destinations may choose to leave tourism aside entirely as part of its economic development portfolio. For Benner [28], in the absence of exogenous changes due to policy interventions, or public pressure, in a scenario of overtourism, a destination’s tourism sector might contract, downgrade, dislocate, and eventually even disappear.

### *1.2. Urban-Tourist Dynamics from the Perspective of Gentrification*

In our case study, that of two mature tourist destinations in the most populous cities of the Spanish archipelagos, we argue for the emergence of a new phase of evolution after decline, associated with a process of gentrification. Although there is evidence of the impact of this process in many Western cities, until now, it had only been recognized as affecting urban areas such as historic centers. Mature tourist centers, at least in Spain, had not been analyzed in the light of this new elitization, although the irreversible trend towards their decline had been anticipated, as Knowles and Curtis [29] predicted at the end of the last century. Vera and Rodríguez [30] also pointed out that mass tourism was the final stage in the evolution of these Mediterranean tourist destinations.

However, an analysis from the perspective of tourism gentrification can complement the previous view. As Gotham [31] has pointed out, until the beginning of the 21st century, most analyses of tourism had ignored the impact of tourism on gentrification processes. The studies carried out by this author in the case of New Orleans [32] have given way to extensive literature that has reviewed the links between gentrification in scenarios as diverse as Berlin [33], Venice [34], Memphis [35], Hanoi [36], China [37], or Spain and Latin America [38–40]. Reflection on the relationship between tourism and gentrification includes contributions centered on the theorization of the role of tourists and their practices as producers of tourist space and as generators of medium- and long-term appropriation conflicts, as Hiernaux and González [41] have pointed out.

Tourist gentrification, notes Cocola-Gant [42], involves a deep mutation of the place in which long-term residents can lose the resources and references by which they define their everyday life. The review of conflicts and the emergence of social movements in the tourist city has focused the attention of a powerful line of studies in which the contributions of Colomb and Novy [43] and Opillard [44] stand out. For their part, Gravari-Barbas and Guinand have highlighted the complex and diverse nature of the relationship and point out that tourism more than ever plays an important role in the economy by being generally associated with city rebirth (renaissance and beautification), revitalization, or urban regeneration [45]. Along these lines, this text argues that in El Terreno and Las Canteras a new phase of evolution has been inaugurated, after the stages of maturity and decline, and that this phase is associated with a socio-urban process of gentrification.

### *1.3. The Differentiated Urban-Tourist Dynamics in El Terreno and Santa Catalina-Canteras*

In general, tourism has gone through waves of expansion and restructuring connected to general techno-economic changes. In the case of Palma and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria,

the recognition of tourism and the tourist industry as a complex network, where different business models compete and co-exist in various ways, is important for our understanding of the dynamics behind recent growth in the observed urban tourism transformations [46]. In this sense, we must consider these two territories do not trail a parallel trajectory in a late stage of evolution since, according to the interpretation of destinations as mosaics or assemblages, each can follow a lifecycle that is different from the other, despite their previous common trajectory [47,48]. That is, each of them must be interpreted as a system evolving by responding to external and internal inputs [49]. This fundamental idea lays the necessary foundation of tourism through the lens of the complexity theory, which underlies systems thinking [50].

In summary, in this article we intend to analyze the recent elitist dynamics that are manifested in the mature tourist neighborhoods of El Terreno, in Palma, and Santa Catalina-Canteras, in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, considering the synergies between TALC and the life cycle of urban areas. In both cases, processes of revaluation and social displacement are recognized, but with differentiated dynamics that reflect, through a comparative analysis, an image of the processes of gentrification in a late phase of capitalism.

## 2. Materials and Methods

To characterize the recent socio-urban and tourist dynamics of the mature tourist districts of El Terreno and Santa Catalina-Canteras, we have combined different research sources. First, data from the Continuous Population Register between 2004 and 2019 [51] at a micro spatial level were used. This source is developed based on the exhaustive utilization of the basic variables contained in the Municipal Register on January 1 each year. Among these basic variables, the nationality and place of birth are included for different levels of territorial disaggregation. In our case study, the information is referred to at the lowest possible level of detail, without violating statistical confidentiality, namely the census tracts.

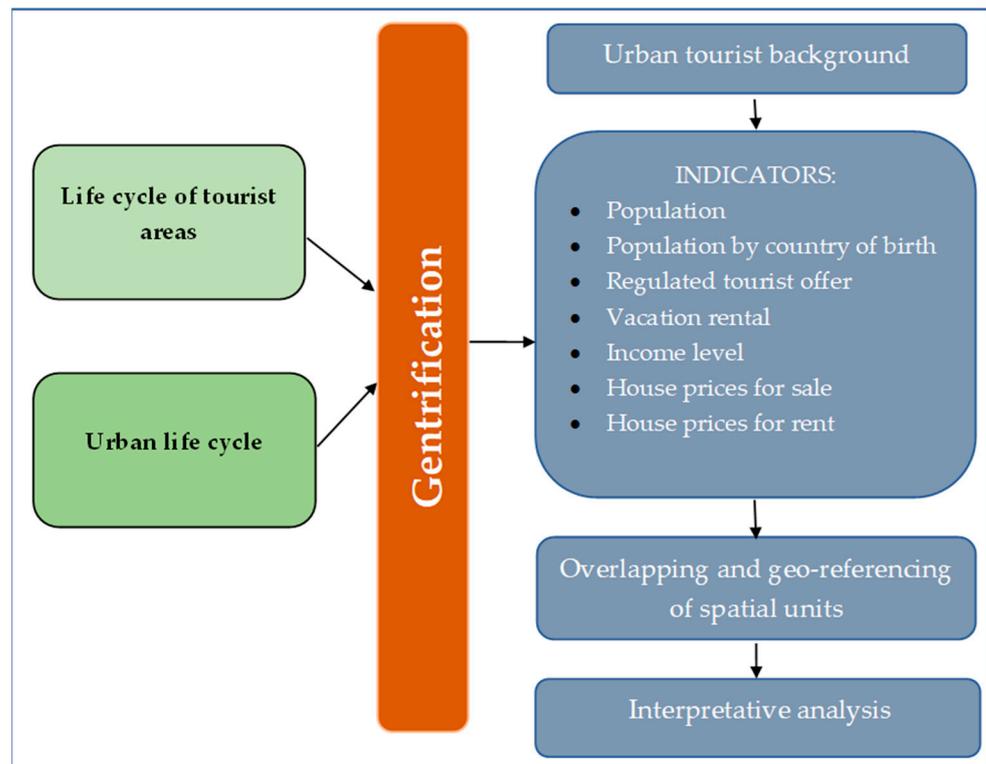
Secondly, information on the socioeconomic level of the population of the neighborhoods studied was considered. In this case, we collected the income data from the Spanish Tax Agency, for the period 2009–19 [52]. The income data are based on the income declared annually by individuals, so it is one of the best possible estimates of the evolution of income at a more detailed scale than at the municipal level, given that it refers to the postal code areas.

Thirdly, data on tourist accommodation was made use of. The National Statistics Institute and the different regional statistics institutes offer information on the hotel and non-hotel tourism offer at the municipal level. The Hotel and Holiday Dwelling Occupancy Survey is a good example of this. Its information allows us to know the evolution of the number of establishments and beds from a time perspective. In this case, as we had to focus the analysis on an infra-municipal scale, we had to resort to the lists of Accommodation Supply of Gran Canaria and Mallorca for 2019, which are produced by the Tourism Boards of the respective islands [53]. These lists show the supply in operation by postal address. The official information was contrasted with the fieldwork and with the data provided by some marketing platforms in relation to holiday homes. Specifically, we consulted the data provided by AIRDNA from platforms such as AirB&B and Vrbo. This portal allowed us to compare the number of dwellings and beds in operation, as well as other data on marketing, using the postal address.

Finally, we also collected information on the evolution of house prices. Official data on housing sales and rental prices in Spain usually only go down to the municipal level and, as we were interested in prices in two specific areas, we resorted to reports from appraisal agencies and electronic agencies. Specifically, we used the data provided by El Idealista.com, which we consider to be the best option for characterizing real estate market trends [54], as they have been provided since 2009, at a district scale.

Therefore, the use of these four main sources allows us to characterize the evolution of the population and residents according to their origin, the income of the resident

population, the supply of tourist accommodation, and the evolution of the sale and rental prices of housing. These are the seven indicators that have been used to analyze the residential and tourist dynamics of both neighborhoods and to detect whether there are processes of gentrification that are leading to the displacement of population according to country of birth (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Methodological outline. Own elaboration.

The data provided by these sources have been treated with descriptive statistical procedures, although the greatest difficulty for the selection of information has derived from the different spatial references provided by the different sources at a micro-scale level. Thus, demographic data corresponds to census tracts, tourism data to specific units (real estate), income data to postal districts, and sales and rental prices to districts. To make the analysis possible, we chose to define the boundaries of the neighborhoods according to census sections, which allowed us to work with information from the census. Using a GIS, postcodes and districts were superimposed on the corresponding census sections, selecting the codes and districts with the best territorial fit. Finally, we geo-referenced the tourist accommodation according to postal address, selecting those located within the census sections that had been chosen.

This work procedure allowed us to achieve the following secondary objectives: (i) to characterize the demographic evolution of these neighborhoods, the increase or decrease in population and, especially, the dynamics of immigration according to the geographical origins of their residents; (ii) to analyze the evolution of the housing supply in order to calibrate the weight of tourist establishments and houses for tourist use in the study areas; (iii) to interpret the changes in the socio-economic levels of these neighborhoods; and (iv) to appraise the parallel or non-parallel evolution of housing prices and of the income level of the population. The combination of these objectives let us establish an image of the recent trends in touristification and in the gentrification processes in both neighborhoods, in a late phase of capitalism, which revalues them for new productive uses and consolidates an unequal city: that of investors versus neighbors.

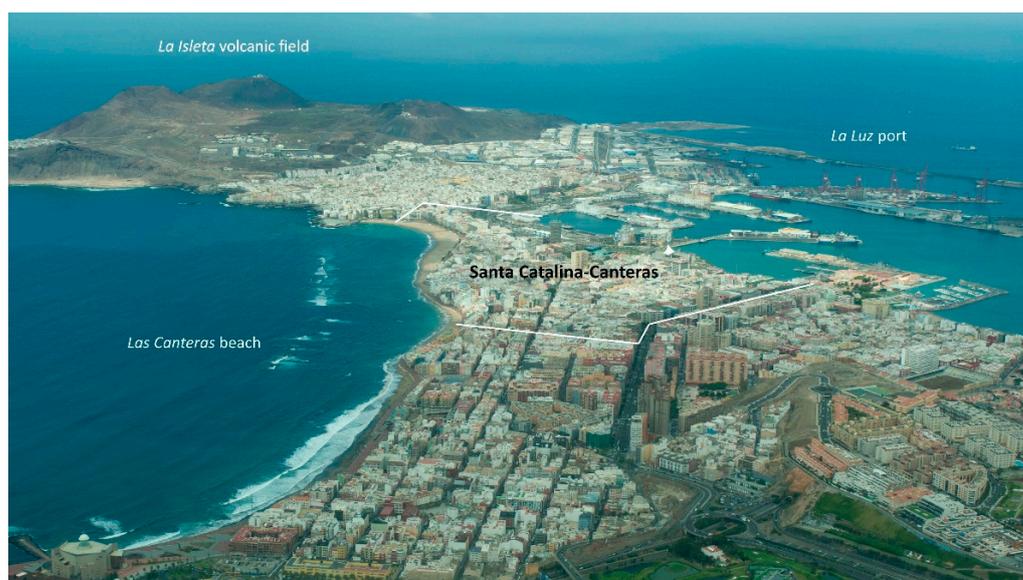
In the following sections, after an in-depth presentation of the study areas and the urban-tourist dynamics that have preceded the recent process of gentrification, the analysis of four of the indicators mentioned in the results section is presented: the dynamics of the regulated and holiday tourism offer and the recent evolution of the population figures and of the contingents according to place of birth. The study of the evolution of property sale and rental prices and per capita income is presented in the discussion section, at the same time as all the results obtained being interpreted in the context of the theories put forward. We conclude with a presentation of the similarities and discrepancies that both destinations seem to have in the interpretative framework indicated.

### 3. Geographic Areas of Study and Urban-Tourist Dynamics

The evolution of both neighborhoods is closely related to the tourist activity, practically from its origins. For that reason, we must begin by characterizing its development process, talking about urban dynamics and about urban-tourist dynamics.

#### 3.1. Santa Catalina-Canteras

This neighborhood is located at the northern end of the isthmus of Guanarteme and sits on the tongue of sand that covers the lava flows from the Holocene volcanic cones of the peninsula of La Isleta, which connect it to the rest of the island of Gran Canaria (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Aerial perspective of Santa Catalina-Canteras. Source: Own elaboration.

It is a neighborhood delimited by the Las Canteras beach, to the west of the isthmus, and by the enclosure of the port of La Luz, to the east, the most important mid-Atlantic port and one of the Spanish ports with the most traffic [55].

The process of urbanization of this isthmus was delayed until the end of the 19th century, when the first dock began to be built, the Santa Catalina dock (1883) [56]. Around the same time, tourism specialization also began, since some local bourgeoisie and aristocratic owners began to erect summer homes, and other foreign investment initiatives, such as those in spas, were added. The occupation of the area was done through a procedure of expansion with an orthogonal grid adapted to low buildings.

Since the 1960s, there has been a proliferation of urban-tourist renovation projects that have led to a significant increase in the number of buildings. A large part of these new buildings corresponded to hotels and apartment complexes. Most of these establishments were erected without a parcellation process, resulting in a medium sized tourist structure. However, on other occasions, a re-parcellation process was carried out, promoted by large

companies, with the inauguration of large hotels in buildings of great volume or height (e.g., the “Hotel Don Juan”, opened in 1968, with 26 floors, or the Hotel Cristina, with 14 floors and 28,000 m<sup>2</sup>, among others), to meet the demand of mass sun and beach tourism from Northern and Western Europe [6].

In the mid-seventies, the city had more than 33,000 beds [57], most of them located in the Santa Catalina-Las Canteras neighborhood. However, from that date on, the flow of tourists to the city began to lose importance in favor of the new destinations located in the south of the island [58,59]. As a result, some establishments, especially extra hoteliers, and hotels with lower status or further from the beach, were reconverted into residential or office buildings. This process of progressive loss of the tourist function continued for more than two decades, so that in 2001 the municipality had only 7700 beds.

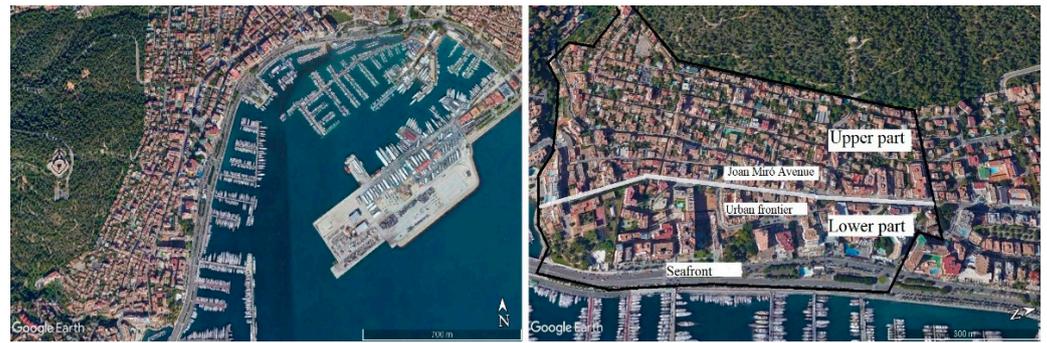
Today, Santa Catalina-Canteras can be considered a hybrid neighborhood, which is structured around Las Canteras beach on its western side, and around the port facilities on the eastern side. Over the last two decades, public investment has focused on the growth and remodeling of public space for pedestrian use and the creation of port facilities for the reception of cruise ships. For its part, private investment has generated, in addition to new or rehabilitated properties for residential use, urban-tourist facilities of great centrality (El Muelle shopping centre, Poema del Mar Aquarium). Therefore, the neighborhood is currently a dynamic space in which residential, commercial, and tourist uses are concentrated and in which the existence of degraded areas, a legacy of past dynamics, can be recognized.

### 3.2. *El Terreno*

This neighborhood was a small extramural nucleus disconnected from the city until 1932. Sponsored by the petite bourgeoisie of Palma, in the middle of the 19th century important construction activity began in the neighborhood with the aim of building residences for their enjoyment during the summer period. In 1910, El Terreno was fully constituted, and in the same year the first hotel (the Reina Victoria) was inaugurated. Although it continued to be a place of lax construction, with mostly single-family homes with gardens, in the following two decades the houses grew in height [60]. Some of them also began to be rented to foreign tourists, especially to the English. Therefore, since the mid-1920s, El Terreno ceased to be a summer home for the middle classes of Palma and became a hotel and residential zone [61].

From 1950, the tourist boom transformed and gave the current urban form to the neighborhood, since the residential function lost strength in benefit of that of tourism, and the construction of the promenade displaced the centrality of the district towards the coastal road. Finally, the increase in the value of the land meant that the old houses were replaced by apartment blocks and the first line of the promenade was flooded with high-rise buildings that contributed to the isolation of the original neighborhood [1].

Currently, the neighborhood is clearly segregated into two areas, a high zone and a low zone. Joan Miró Avenue, the main street of the neighborhood until the construction of the promenade, acts as an urban border. The high zone is characterized by steep narrow streets and combines single-family houses of the first stages of tourism (architecture of “villes”) with other low quality plurifamiliar houses. The lower area, located between the promenade (Avenida Gabriel Roca) and Avenida Joan Miró, is a highly valued area. This low zone, in which many of the premises of nocturnal leisure are concentrated, is characterized by its tall buildings, creating a wall effect, specialized in the residential function or in the offer of high-quality tourism. In the middle, Joan Miró street is in deep decline. Small stores, alternative nightlife venues, and buildings with a degraded residential function characterize this central part of the neighborhood, a formerly recognized tourist center of the Mediterranean and foreseeably one of the future new gentrified areas of the city (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Aerial perspective and large urban areas of El Terreno. Source: Own elaboration from Google Earth (Lawrence, KS, USA) (2020).

#### 4. Results: Analysis of Recent Urban-Tourist and Demographic Dynamics

##### 4.1. Current Situation and Recent Trends of the Tourist Activity

Having presented the urban-tourist evolution of both neighborhoods in the previous section, we will now delve into the current tourist offer and the trends that have been recorded over the last five years, in accordance with the objectives of this work.

The Santa Catalina-Canteras neighborhood had 21 hotels, three hostels, and 3221 beds at the beginning of 2020, which made up a diverse offer: two five-star, four four-star, and eight three-star establishments and the remaining seven with lower categories (Table 1). The offer is also varied in relation to the size of the establishments: three of them large for an urban environment, with more than 400 rooms, four of intermediate size, and the vast majority being small hotels with less than 100 rooms.

**Table 1.** Touristic offer in Santa Catalina-Canteras and El Terreno. Source: Own elaboration, based on Listings of Accommodation Establishments (Tourism Boards of Mallorca and Gran Canaria).

		Santa Catalina-Canteras	El Terreno
<b>Hotels</b>	N°	24	5
	Beds	3221	603
<b>Apartments</b>	N°	17	
	Beds	1228	
<b>Vacation rentals</b>	N°	697	16
	Beds	2188	91

Most of these businesses were inaugurated in the 1960s and, except for a few of lower category, have been thoroughly reformed and upgraded in the last decade. In addition, there are other small and medium sized businesses that have been opened in recent years and that make up a fabric of emblematic hotels in historic buildings, collection hotels, and boutique hotels, aimed at a clientele with medium-high purchasing power. It was precisely the recent opening of new hotels and the future prospects in this regard that led the Trip Advisor portal to recognize the city as the first emerging destination in Europe in 2016 [62].

The hotel offer is completed in the neighborhood with a wide range of apartments. Seventeen apartment complexes are in operation in the Santa Catalina-Canteras neighborhood, coming to a total of 1228 beds. They are all small or medium sized complexes that began their operation in the sixties and seventies. A few of these complexes, which are the best located, have undergone processes of remodeling and maintain the unity of exploitation. In some cases, new operating companies commercialize them. Others are still oriented to a low-price segment, without obtaining income from their excellent location.

To this regulated tourist offer, we must add 2188 beds in tourist housing, a type of vacation rental recently introduced in the Canary Islands, with an even more recent regulation at the regional and municipal level. In relation to this tourist housing of the

neighborhood, three situations can be found, depending on their origin and form of exploitation. First, main homes or those that were for real estate rental that have been registered as tourist housing by their owners. Second, former apartment complexes that were residentialized between the seventies and nineties when the city's tourist decline took place. They have recently begun to be marketed under this new formula, in view of the greater business prospects by their owners, or through operating companies that have entered in this market, under contractual formulas involving the remodeling of the properties. Third, apartment complexes without a previous residentialization process change their operating model. Therefore, the current panorama brings together situations typical of the collaborative economy with others that are clearly professionalized.

In the case of El Terreno, a neighborhood considered the first tourist district of the Balearic Islands and categorized as a mature tourist enclave, it is observed that it has progressively abandoned its tourist specialization. Unlike Santa Catalina-Canteras, tourism is now secondary, with a predominance of low-quality accommodation and leisure on the promenade, although some properties have been revaluated as secondary homes.

Currently, the neighborhood has five hotels and 603 beds: one of five stars, another of three, and the rest, which are hotels and hostels of low category (Table 1). Unlike the modern and luxurious boutique hotels that are constantly increasing their offer in the historical center of Palma [63], in El Terreno all the hotels are more than 60 years old. That is, they were built during the so-called first tourist boom. The most upscale and biggest capacity hotel is located on the seafront, on the same promenade. The lower category hotels are in the degraded Joan Miró street, former epicenter of tourism in the 1950s and 1960s.

The upper part of the neighborhood concentrates 14 of the 16 ETV (tourist housing stays). The other two are in Joan Miró street. The oldest one opened in 2014. Twelve are from 2017 and the last one is from 2018. These 16 ETV offer 91 beds according to the official data offered by the Government of the Balearic Islands. However, the reality and the use of other alternative sources show a much more important offer. AIRDNA, from the homes located in the Airbnb and Vrbo platforms, accounted for 75 active rentals in the fourth quarter of 2019. This is lower than the data obtained four years earlier (fourth quarter 2016), when they totaled 123. This decrease is probably linked to the effects of tourist zoning (areas suitable for tourist marketing) because of the application of Law 6/2017 on Tourism in the Balearic Islands. In April 2018, Palma was declared a single zone. This prohibits, without exceptions, the rental of houses to tourists and, with some exceptions, is allowed in single-family homes. With these rules, Palma became the first Spanish city to take measures of this scope.

#### *4.2. Demographic Evolution and Modification of Immigrant Stocks According to Nationality*

In a city of 379,925 inhabitants in 2019, the census sections corresponding to the Santa Catalina-Canteras neighborhood showed a population figure of 21,732 inhabitants, that is, 5.7% of the municipal population, with one fifth being foreigners (21.6%).

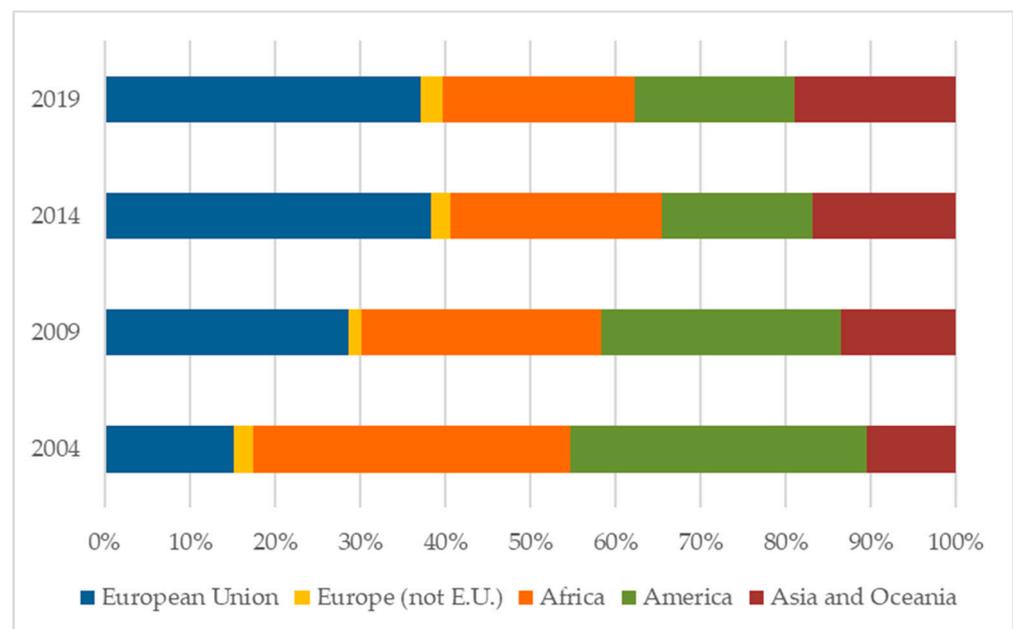
When we compare these data with those of the population 15, 10, and five years ago (Table 2), we can see that the growth rate was very intense between 2004 and 2009 (5.93% over five years), when tourism obsolescence confirmed the trend towards a housing supply that reused the old non-hotel accommodation, at a time of great immigration attraction, linked to the years of the real estate boom in the Spanish economy.

Therefore, the growth of this neighborhood was due to the contribution of the foreign population, whose number increased by 3.9% per year in those five years. Since the crisis, the population drastically reduced its growth rate as a result of the retraction in migratory flows and, in the incipient phase of economic recovery, negative rates have been recorded, as there has been a revaluation of tourism use, a trend that is affecting especially the population of foreign origin.

**Table 2.** Population of Santa Catalina-Canteras. Source: Own elaboration based on the Continuous Population Register, INE (National Statistics Institute).

	Spaniards	Foreigners	Total	Annual Growth Rate for Spaniards (%)	Annual Census Growth Rate for Foreigners (%)
2004	15,951	5465	21,416		
2009	16,164	6522	22,686	1.2	3.9
2014	17,205	5682	22,887	0.2	−2.6
2019	17,033	4699	21,732	−1.0	−3.5

Regarding the composition of the foreign population and its evolution in relative terms, Figure 4 shows that the participation of foreigners from the European Community has been gaining weight, stabilizing at around 37%, and that the population from Africa has lost presence, and that the population of Asian origin has reinforced its importance, with the population of American origin remaining at around 18%.

**Figure 4.** Evolution of the foreign population in Santa Catalina-Canteras. Source: Own elaboration based on the Continuous Population Register (National Statistics Institute).

Among the nationalities with a number above 150 people in 2019, there is a continued decrease of Moroccan, Colombian, and Cuban residents, an increasing evolution of Italians and an increase of Germans and Chinese between 2009 and 2014 and a subsequent decrease between 2014 and 2019. All of this reports a modification of the neighborhood in terms of elitization processes, due to the foreseeable correlation between nationality and income.

In the case of El Terreno, the little more than 5600 inhabitants of the neighborhood represent only 1.35% of the population of Palma. Of these, 29.5% have foreign nationality, a percentage clearly higher than that of the municipality (15.84%). However, the social-urban behavior of this small part of the city is an example of the processes of social, economic, landscape, and cultural transformation that are affecting mature tourist nuclei that, after successive stages of splendor and degradation, are reinventing themselves through gentrification.

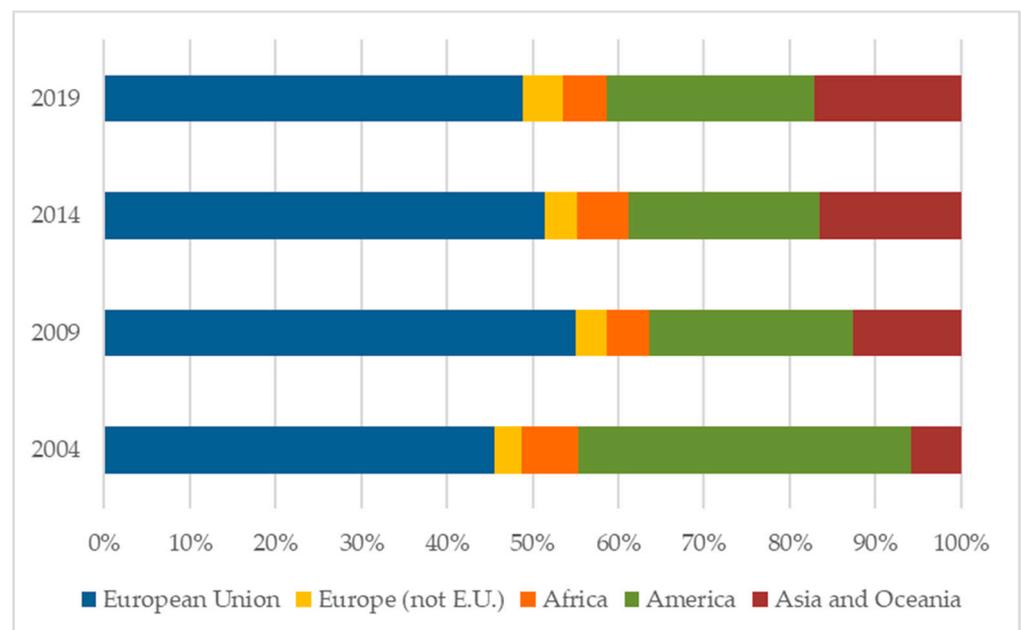
The evolution of population in the last fifteen years in El Terreno was opposite to that in Santa Catalina Las Canteras. The urban degradation of the neighborhood in its stage of tourist obsolescence retracted the number of inhabitants, especially those of foreign nationality. This drop in the number of inhabitants from 2009 onwards in the case of

non-Spaniards can be explained mainly by the consequences of the economic crisis and the impact of unemployment on the immigrant labor population. This explains why, in just five years (2009–2014), foreigners reduced their representation by almost 27%. On the contrary, the last five years, when the effects of the crisis had been significantly mitigated in the Balearic tourist economy, the population recovered its dynamism supported by a growing arrival of foreigners. However, these were foreigners of another origin. As in the case of Santa Catalina-Canteras, we are facing a first indicator of the socio-urban transformations of the district in the postcrisis stage (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Population of El Terreno. Source: Own elaboration based on statistics data from the Statistical Institute of the Balearic Islands (IBESTAT).

	Spaniards	Foreigners	Total	Annual Growth Rate for Spaniards (%)	Annual Census Growth Rate for Foreigners (%)
2004	3812	2377	6189		
2009	3781	2159	5940	−0.81	−9.17
2014	3797	1577	5374	−0.42	−26.96
2019	3993	1673	5666	5.16	6.09

This trend is supported by the analysis of the evolution of the foreign population according to origin (Figure 5). As in the case of the Canary Islands, the representation of foreigners from the European Union is increasing (almost 50% of the total in 2019) and, to a lesser extent, that of Asians (mainly Chinese and Filipinos). This relative growth occurs mainly at the cost of a loss of representation of Americans. The latter have gone from almost 40% in 2004 to less than 25% in 2019.



**Figure 5.** Evolution of the foreign population in El Terreno. Source: Own elaboration based on the Continuous Population Register, INE (National Statistics Institute).

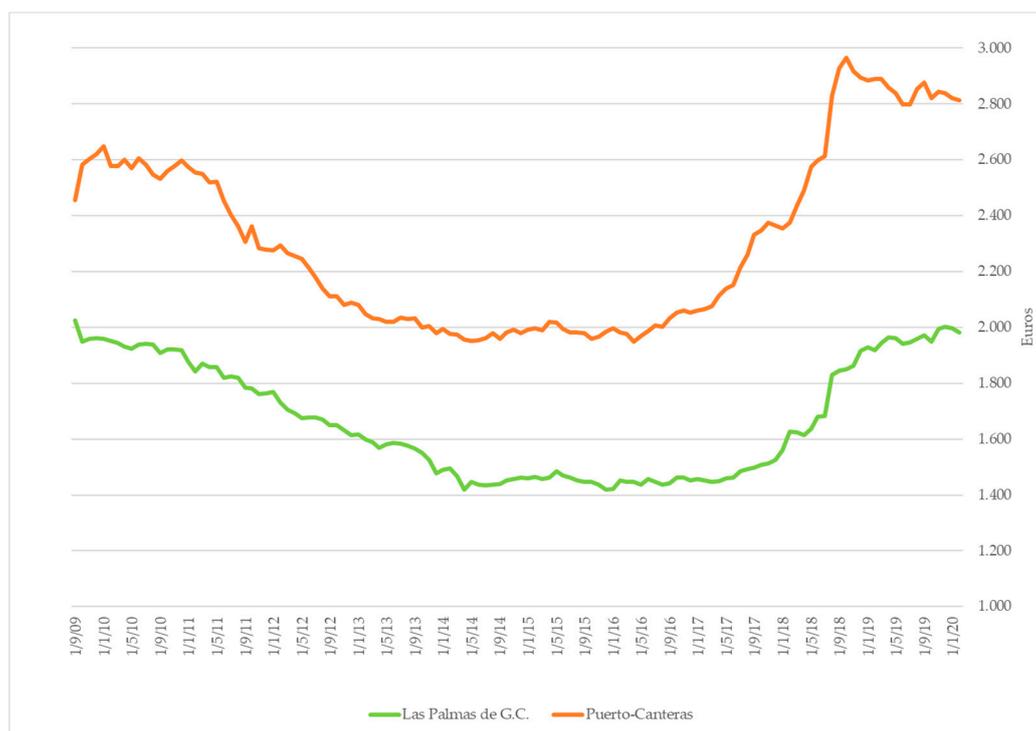
If we take as a reference the more numerous nationalities in 2019, the evolution points to an increase of Germans, Italians, and, to a lesser extent, British and French people, and a fall of Bulgarians and Colombians. The case of Bulgarian nationals is an indicator of the social and economic changes in the neighborhoods: in only ten years, they have gone from leading the number of foreigners to occupying the fourth position and, more importantly, showing a clearly downward trend.

In short, from opposed population evolutions (increase of the population in El Terreno and decrease in Santa Catalina-Las Canteras), the two neighborhoods go in the same direction: that of elitization. A gentrification where the foreign groups of the North play a fundamental role in the two neighborhoods under study. In these, the European Community Members progressively replace the up to recently majority of labor immigrants from the South.

### 5. Discussion: Two Processes of International Gentrification Differentiated in the Final Phase of the Life Cycle Models

The urban, tourist, and socio-demographic transformations described, in relation to recent years, manifest two differentiated urban-tourist dynamics, but leading, in both cases, to the development of gentrification processes.

This gentrification is based on an increase in the purchase and rental prices of the homes. This is what happens in the Santa Catalina-Canteras neighborhoods. In recent times, the district registered a continuous drop in purchase and sale prices from the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008 to the summer of 2014. As of the first quarter of 2016, a price escalation was set in motion, culminating in September 2019, when the highest average value per square meter was reached in the neighborhoods, that of 3104 Euros, well above the average value in the city, according to the real estate portal Idealista.com. This trend also occurred in the city as a whole, but the recent increase in prices was much more moderate (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Average price per m<sup>2</sup> in Euros of sales (2009–2019) in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and Santa Catalina-Canteras. Source: Own elaboration from El Idealista.

These same trends can be seen in the evolution of rentals. The neighborhoods registered the most expensive average rent per m<sup>2</sup> in the city, having reached their maximum value in 2018 (13.06 Euros). In 2018, the Paseo de Las Canteras, the waterfront avenue of Santa Catalina-Canteras, was the fifth most expensive average rental street in Spain, according to Tecnitasa [64].

The above trends are explained by several reasons. Firstly, the importance of the productive restructuring of the tourism sector, since it promotes the purchase of real

estate for tourist rentals and new hotel products. Secondly, the purchase of real estate by international demand for vacation and productive purposes. The data of the Association of Registrars support this for the whole of the Canary Islands. In 2018, more than 31% of the purchase and sale operations in the islands were carried out by foreigners, especially the British, Germans, the French, Belgians, and Swedes. Finally, the early revaluation of investments and the environmental quality of the surroundings of Las Canteras beach has meant that local demand has grown in a large part of the area, although possibly more oriented towards business than for residential purposes.

The increase in real estate prices has its correlation in the increase of income levels of the resident population in the Santa Catalina-Canteras neighborhoods. Indeed, taking as a reference the data of the postal district of La Isleta-Puerto-Guanarteme, which coincides in statistics terms with the studied zone, the gross average income changed from 29,370 Euros, in 2013, to 31,261 Euros, in 2017 (Statistics of the Declarants of the Income Tax of the Physical Persons). This increase in income may be due in part to an improvement in the economic conditions of the resident population, but if we consider the evolution of income in other districts that have not had such a significant real estate expansion in the city, we can conclude that the growth in income is related to the construction of new homes and the increase in rents and sales prices.

However, the increases in income are more moderate than those recorded in real estate sales and rental prices. This informs us that tourism activity and international demand, which is not directly reflected in income values, are what sustain the prices of real estate in the neighborhoods and not so much the arrival of local people with more purchasing power to occupy the new properties or to replace residents with lower incomes. In other words, the 'expulsion' of residents who cannot pay their rents or who find it advantageous to sell or put their property up for tourist rental must be placed within the framework of a process of tourist gentrification that is fundamentally given by the development of rental for tourist use and international residential tourism.

In El Terreno, the real estate market was also very dynamic at the beginning of 2020. The number of houses for sale was important in all census sections, exceeding 200 in those located in the central (around Joan Miró street) and lower (promenade) parts of the neighborhoods. In all the sections, the sale prices were high, but in the part coinciding with the maritime façade, the highest sales means were registered. These two sections also led the rental offer of Section 07-040-02-007, bordering the heavily gentrified neighborhoods of Santa Catalina and Espanyolet, and had the highest prices, while Section 07-040-02-010 showed the lowest values. This area corresponds to the highest part of the city, in contact with Parc de Bellver and where the building model combines traditional single-family housing with low quality multi-family blocks (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Housing for sale and residential rent by census tract in El Terreno (13-03-2020). Source: Own elaboration from El Idealista.

Census Tract	Total Houses Sold	Total Rental Housing	Average Sales Price (€/m <sup>2</sup> )	Average Rental Price (€/m <sup>2</sup> )
07-040-02-007	121	24	4397	14.60
07-040-02-008	244	82	4266	12.67
07-040-02-009	229	59	4029	11.91
07-040-02-010	152	16	3744	11.77
El Terreno	746	181	4015	12.69
Palma	8036	1537	3784	13.44

Although El Terreno does not constitute a single zip code but is integrated into a larger territory (zip code 07014, son Dureta), the evolution of income provides us with some clues to the socio-urban transformations of the neighborhoods. The average gross income in 2017, the last data available, is among the highest in Palma, exceeding the municipal average by almost 17,000 Euros. Simultaneously, the differences between zip codes are

increasing, a symptom of the growing urban inequalities in this post-crisis stage. Between 2013 and 2017, the municipal average increased by about 4000 euros, while it did so by 11,000 euros in our study area. In Palma, the year-on-year percentage growth has been around 4% since 2014, and in Son Dureta it reached over 14% in 2016–2017 (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Evolution of average gross income indicators 2013–2017. Postal code 07014—Son Dureta. Source: Own elaboration based on statistics of personal income tax filers in the largest municipalities by zip code, Tax Office.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Son Dureta	36,007	37,534	38,127	41,251	47,300
Palma	26,452	26,841	27,994	28,973	30,343
	-	2013–2014	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017
Son Dureta	-	4.24%	1.58%	8.19%	14.66%
Palma	-	1.47%	4.30%	3.50%	4.73%

This spectacular increase in income, in a dynamic real estate market, shows that demographic contingents with greater purchasing power have chosen the neighborhood as their place of residence. If we bear in mind that in recent years, especially the population of community origin has grown, we can say that El Terreno is increasingly integrated into the international residential real estate market and that, consequently, a process of gentrification is taking place in which the new European Community inhabitants, especially Germans, Italians, the British, and the French, are gaining weight to the detriment of the population that had resided there until then, that is, the Spanish and foreigners of other nationalities.

Therefore, faced with the uncertain future of tourism in the neighborhood, an influential real estate sector is consolidating and producing a growing residentialization linked to a high-income level population, in many cases of European Community origin. The numerous offers of housing for rent and, above all, for sale, the high prices reached and the constantly increasing average income levels, are at the base of these processes.

In correspondence with a post-Fordist regime, of global capitalism and the model of flexible and digital accumulation [65], El Terreno and Santa Catalina-Canteras have evolved towards a new system of production and consumption of real estate and tourism, experiencing great transformations as a response to the global economic crisis of 2008 and as a strategy to adapt to new models of regulation. The system of production and consumption has in common, for both cases, its dependence on demand and international investment, but they follow different paths.

In El Terreno, the transformation is oriented towards residentialization, so from the point of view of the tourist life cycle model, it implies deepening its decline from its position as a mature destination, because of the restrictions on vacation housing imposed in the city of Palma (Law 6/2017 on Tourism in the Balearic Islands) and of the appearance of new real estate agents. These are listed real estate investment companies or investment “culture” funds, which have only favored the international real estate market.

In Santa Catalina-Canteras, in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, the transformation involves a commitment to the Peer-to-Peer Collaborative Economy, to residential or second home tourism and to new forms of coastal tourism. From the life cycle model, the neighborhood rejuvenates, but with the predominance of tourist and real estate accommodation far from the traditional tourist formulas.

In both cases, in these final stages of the life cycle model as tourist destinations, gentrification processes occur, which is also related to the revaluation phase in the life cycle model of the neighborhoods. In both cases, after a stage of ethnicization and loss of real estate value (“filtering”), increases in real estate value and social substitution are registered. Again, the internationalization of tourism and real estate activities are at the base of these processes, but in the case of Santa Catalina-Canteras, we are facing a process of tourism gentrification. In this regard, the gentrifying capacity of tourism has been

analyzed as the result of the increase of the tourist function within the residential urban space [2,33], considering that the tourism increase might occur under traditional forms of exploitation or through new modalities in the digital economy framework. This new context is removing from the offer many of the properties that were intended for permanent residential use, and this, in turn, implies processes of displacement and social elitization in the urban destinations.

## 6. Conclusions

The study of urban transformations and social changes linked to tourism cycles gains greater importance when faced from a comparative perspective. The neighborhoods of El Terreno in Palma (Mallorca) and Santa Catalina-Canteras in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Gran Canaria), located in the two most populous cities of their respective archipelagos, had a similar urban-tourist development until the end of the 20th century. They are neighborhoods that originally housed summer homes for owners of their respective cities and later became a hotel and residential area that accommodated foreign tourists, a specialization that increased from the 1950s until the 1980s, when their maturity as tourist neighborhoods was affected by a certain obsolescence.

Over the years, both spaces have maintained a complementary relationship with the rest of the urban neighborhoods, given that they have not only been places of leisure for visitors and tourists, but also for the enjoyment of the local population, as well as a place of permanent residence for a considerable number of residents. In the case of Santa Catalina-Canteras, the renovation actions undertaken since then have increased the residentialization of the neighborhood, giving it a certain tourist-residential hybridity. However, in El Terreno, there was a certain differentiation of uses between a higher and more distant area from the coast of a residential nature, more degraded, and the coastal area, with a residential and tourist function, both of higher quality.

During the first three lustrums of this century, both in Santa Catalina-Canteras and in El Terreno (especially in its upper area), the most deteriorated properties that had been withdrawn from the tourist accommodation offer were put on the rental market, with many workers with scarce resources agreeing to rent them, mostly labor immigrants from non-EU countries. Therefore, these neighborhoods have contributed to the development of the consolidated city, both from an urban, housing, and economic point of view. However, they have been integrated into it with a particular idiosyncrasy, as tourists, labor immigrants, lifestyle immigrants, and residents of different origins have shared the leisure space represented by its beaches and surroundings and have participated in the dynamism of its tourist and tourist-residential economy.

Since 2014, the demographic and economic dynamics of the two neighborhoods in this study have diverged. In the first case, Santa Catalina-Canteras, the revaluation of the neighborhood for tourist use has caused a demographic loss, while in the second, El Terreno, its residential strength has been recovered, attracting foreigners with high purchasing power. At the same time, in Santa Catalina-Canteras, the revaluation of tourism has meant an increase in rents and purchase prices and, indirectly, has increased the income levels of the population. Thus, the process of gentrification has led to neighborhood protests, who consider that the investment in the refurbishment of properties for rent as holiday homes is contributing to the expulsion of residents, a type of reaction that has not occurred in the rest of the city's neighborhoods.

In the case of El Terreno, an influential real estate sector has been consolidated, as well as a residential sector linked to a high economic level population, which has meant that the average gross income of this urban sector is among the highest in Palma. Unlike other neighborhoods in the capital of Mallorca, the first gentrification dynamics have not, for the moment, produced a high level of neighborhood protest. They are probably not yet very visible to the public, but they are irreversible. The gentrification in El Terreno is part of an expansive wave that first affected the historic center and later the neighboring districts of

Santa Catalina and Espanyolet. It is a process that, like an oil stain, has been spreading to potentially profitable areas of the city for real estate investment.

In short, the two mature tourist districts, in the island cities of Palma and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, offer divergent trajectories in this phase of late capitalism. In both, we witness a certain social elitization in a context of revaluation, after a phase of loss of value, according to the model of life cycle of the neighborhoods, but in Santa Catalina-Canteras, this occurs in a context of tourist rejuvenation and in El Terreno, of decline, according to the model of life cycle of the destinations. In conclusion, the productive reorganization, and the search for new capital gains result in a process of gentrification, either predominantly tourist, in the case of Santa Catalina-Canteras, or residential, in the case of El Terreno, conditioning their functional specialization and promoting social inequality.

At the time of writing, it is difficult to predict what the future trends will be in these urban-tourist areas, as the pandemic has considerably reduced the flow of tourists and labor migrants, contracted investment in tourist rehabilitation, and led to a decrease in real estate transactions and a fall in house prices. However, it is likely that the hybrid character of these areas will favor an earlier recovery than that which will characterize other tourist enclaves on the coast, outside the big cities.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, methodology, investigation, resources, writing, and review and editing: J.D.-M., J.M.P.-C., J.M.G.-P. and D.S.-A. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This research was funded by the projects: “Housing and international mobility in cities of the Canary Islands. The emergence of new forms of urban inequality” (RTI2018-093296-B-C21) and “Housing and International Mobility in the Cities of the Balearic Islands. The Emergence of New Forms of Urban Inequality” (RTI2018-093296-B-C22), financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)/Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades—Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI) (Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities—State Research Agency (AEI).

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The study did not require ethical approval.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Data Availability Statement:** Raw data are publicly available.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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