

July 2017

# Summer's here

**SUR**  
in English



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**Traditions explained.**  
Carmen and summer ferias

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**Further afield.**  
The Andalusian coast beyond the Costa del Sol

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**Cover photo.** Puerto Banús, where luxury yachts line up alongside a string of designer boutiques and exclusive restaurants. Marbella's iconic marina comes to life during the summer months.



## Summer's here!

### SUR IN ENGLISH SUMMER SPECIAL

**Director General:** José Luis Romero

**Editor in Chief:** Manuel Castillo

**Publications Director:** Pedro Luis Gómez

**Editor:** Rachel Haynes

**Commercial Director:** Jorge Artero

**Advertising Manager:** Emma Vera

**Art Director:** Francisco Ruano

#### Contributors to this magazine:

Daryl Finch, Debbie Bartlett, Jennie Rhodes, Tony Bryant, Denise Bush, Marlene Wörner, Ken Campbell, Gabriela Berner, Uwe Scheele, Kishan Vaghela, Rachael Breaks, Patrick Stamann

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www.surinenglish.com

@SUR\_English

**Advertising:** evera@diariosur.es

952649669

**Editorial:** surinenglish.su@diariosur.es

952649600

### RACHEL HAYNES

This year the summer seems to have come all of a sudden. After an unsettled start to spring, with storms battering the beaches which by then we should have been lying on, when the hot weather came in June we didn't really trust it, leaving it till the last minute to dig out the flip-flops and the sun cream.

Now though, with the school year at its end, exams over and the San Juan fires all burnt out, it's time for summer proper. This time there's no doubt about it: it's hot and the season's in full swing.

A quick survey of the international community on the Costa del Sol reveals mixed feelings towards the summer season. For many who work in the tourism industry this is the busiest season; the pace is the same or even faster than the rest of the year - life goes on, work goes on, it's hot, but that's the point.

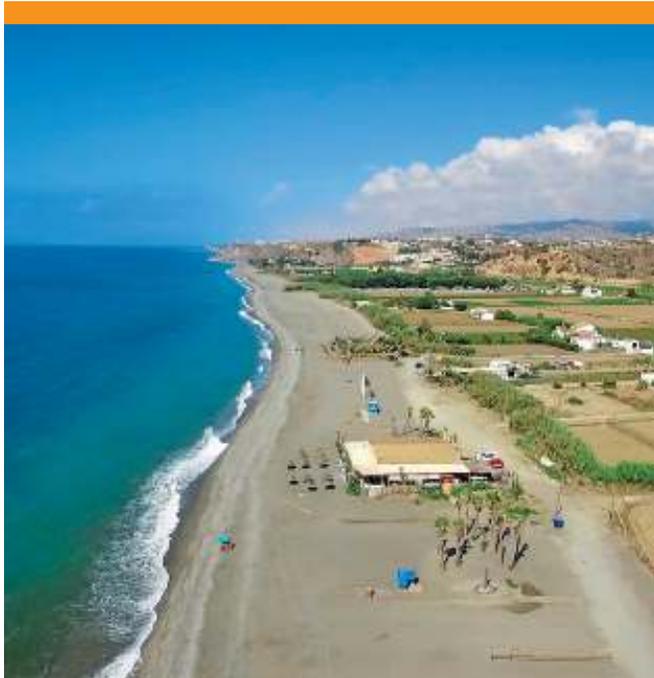
Then there are those who escape, the winter sun lovers who flee the hot weather for as long as possible, and therefore are unlikely to be reading this. And then there are the rest, who may have their summer holidays, or their well-deserved leisure time that the Spanish so nicely call "jubilación", but stay put on the Costa del Sol. This is where everyone else wants to be, so why not enjoy our many

tourist attractions too?

After all, those of us who live here have an advantage. We've done our field work and we know what time we need to go to the beach and where to park to avoid the crowds. We know that the best place for an ice cream is not necessarily the one on the main drag with the long queues and high prices. And at the same time we're able to take advantage of all the attractions this area has to offer. How often do we find that tourists have seen more in their week's holiday than we have in years as residents? We're always reading and even boasting of Malaga's growing number of museums and monuments, but when was the last time we enjoyed them ourselves? The same can be said for waterparks, river walks, white villages and relaxing spas, all of them on our own doorsteps.

Neither do we need to go far to take a break and discover somewhere new: Cadiz, Huelva, Granada and Almeria all have beautiful coastlines that are easily reachable from the Costa del Sol.

So let's stop complaining about the heat, the crowds and the traffic and enjoy what southern Spain has to offer, whether we're here for a week, a month or the rest of our lives. Perhaps this magazine will provide some inspiration to rediscover the area. Just remember to keep out of the midday sun and stay cool!



## By the sea

Thousands of tourists flock to the Costa del Sol and the entire Andalusian coastline every summer to enjoy a range of sandy beaches and the Mediterranean Sea. In this issue we reveal more about the lesser known beaches east of Malaga as well as a guide to where it's okay to strip off completely. Meanwhile others prefer spotting celebrities in the busy and extravagant beach clubs of Marbella.



## Beach food

A day on the beach in the province of Malaga is not complete without a traditional 'espeto' of sardines cooked on a cane skewer over an open fire. But remember to check there's no R in the month and to put your knife and fork away.

## My summer

We asked a cross-section of international residents on the Costa del Sol to tell us what they love (and hate) about the summer, where they like to chill and what they do to keep cool on a hot day.

## Music and more

From music festivals to fairs and flamenco: if you want some ideas about how to fill your long summer evenings with entertainment then there are plenty of ideas in this section.

## Explore

The holidays provide us with plenty of spare time to travel a little further afield, beyond the typical Costa del Sol resorts and discover what the rest of Andalucia has to offer. This summer magazine takes us cycling on an old railway line in Cadiz province as well as proving how there's more to Tarifa than surfing.



## In town

Summer evenings, once the midday heat has given way to cooler temperatures, are ideal for strolling through towns and villages. In this edition we look at why the town of Estepona is known as the garden of the Costa del Sol, as well as taking a trip back through the history of an iconic holiday high street, Calle San Miguel in Torremolinos.

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# Unspoilt beaches and a large dose of history

**Many tourists and day-trippers heading east jump from Malaga to Nerja, ignoring the quiet stretch of coastline in between**

From the west of Torre del Mar to Chilches, authentic chiringuitos mix with fields, fishermen's cottages, 18th century watchtowers and former train station buildings

**JENNIE RHODES**

The coastline that stretches out along the N340 coastal road from Torre del Mar, through Almayate, Valle Niza, Benajárfate and Chilches is not only steeped in history but also a treat for the eyes and soul in the 21st century. The

road, which was once the only one connecting Malaga city with its eastern province, curves around the cliffs and almost appears to be a continuation of the beach in some parts.

Generally there's no organised parking and nobody trying to charge you to park. Parking is, just off the road, on a first-come first-served basis. By the end of the day, any vehicle perched on the side of the road will be covered in dust, if not from the slow moving traffic of the N340, from sand blown on to them from the beach on which they are practically parked.

This section of the N340 was, from 1908 until 1968 shared with 'La Cochinita', the train that ran from Malaga up

to Zafarraya, stopping at El Palo, Rincón de la Victoria, Chilches, Benajárfate, Torre del Mar, Vélez-Málaga and Periana, before ending its journey in Zafarraya, up in the mountains on the border of Granada province.

The old train station buildings have a uniformity about them; each one almost identical in design and size. The ones in Rincón de la Victoria and Benajárfate are used today as tourist information offices and lifeguard bases and in Torre del Mar and Vélez-Málaga they are home to the towns' bus stations.

In February 1937 the N340 witnessed hundreds of thousands of people from Malaga trying to flee to Almería as news that Franco's and Fascist Italian

Benajárfate beach and town. :: SUR





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Almayate beach, surrounded by agriculture. :: SUR



Torre del Mar train station. :: SUR



Old train track near Rincón. :: SUR



Chilches, where the main road and beach run side by side. :: SUR

troops had entered the city. The event is known as the Desbandá and it is marked every year on the anniversary of what was to become one of the greatest losses of lives in the Spanish Civil War. The fleeing civilians were bombed from the area and attacked from land and sea; several thousand were massacred.

This coastal road takes us back even further in history, however, as it is also lined with watchtowers. Most of them date back to the 18th century, when the Spanish military used them to warn of attack during the French-Spanish and Anglo-Spanish wars of the time. This stretch of coastline has also been used heavily by pirates over the centuries.

Now the beaches simply offer wide stretches of sand, calm waters and a natural backdrop for those wishing to avoid the noisier and more crowded beaches of neighbouring towns.

### Playa de Almayate

From the mouth of the Río Vélez on the western most point of Torre del Mar, heading in the direction of Malaga, high-rise buildings and trendy beach bars disappear altogether and are replaced by reeds, followed by fields growing peppers, tomatoes and other local produce and the occasional boatyard.

The first beach on this journey has become a favourite among dog owners since Vélez-Málaga Town Hall designated the space up to the Río Vélez as a dog beach in 2016. A little further along and the beach-goers change somewhat to naturists; a section of beach around the Almayate campsite has been a long-term favourite for those seeking a nudist beach.

A row of hidden chiringuitos lines Playa del Hornillo, also in Almayate, a wide expanse of beach accessible via minor roads off the N340. The famous Osborne black bull has been overlooking sunbathers from the hill on the other side of the road since the company launched its famous advertising in...and Spaniards voted en masse to keep them where they were when the company stopped the publicity.

### Valle Niza

On one side of the N340 is a series of large-modern looking housing deve-

lopments and on the other, the wide beach continues, with the occasional authentic looking beach-shack, no worse equipped than any in a larger town. It's also home to the large Puerto Niza restaurant and a campsite.

### Benajárfefe

Fields, the occasional housing development and sporadic fishermen's cottages give way to the town of Benajárfefe. For many years the beach has been awarded blue-flag status and the Spanish 'Q for Quality.' La Estación hostel and cafeteria displays old photos of the train as it passed through the town bringing daytrippers from Malaga. Those daytrips continue today; locals say that the town's fish restaurants are hugely popular with Malaga CF players who allegedly regularly dine there, as does Mayor of Malaga, Francisco de la Torre. The town is also frequented by Spanish singer and actress, Victoria Abril, who has a summer home there.

The beach itself is equipped with leisure facilities and has lifeguards on duty (using the old train station as their base) and is probably the widest part of the N340 stretch.

### Chilches - the final stop

After leaving Benajárfefe the beach becomes narrow again and the N340 feels like it almost forms part of it. Limited off-road parking is available on this undeveloped stretch of coastline. Once again fields and the occasional cottage form the landscape on the other side of the road, before reaching Chilches.



Fields give way to sand - El Hornillo beach, Almayate. :: SUR

An advertisement for Aqua Tropic Waterpark. At the top, it says "WATERPARK" and provides contact information: "info@aqua-tropic.com" and "www.aqua-tropic.com". The central part of the ad features a colorful map of the waterpark with various slides and pools. Below the map, it says "AQUATROPIC FREE BUS" and lists the route: "Torrox bus station - Parque Verano Azul - bus station - Los Arcos Hotel - Aquatrópico". It also includes the departure and return times: "Departure 10,30h. Return: 19,00h." and the address: "PASEO REINA SOFIA S/N ALMUNECAR". Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are also present.



Sunset over Valle Niza, a narrow and quiet beach close to the campsite of the same name. :: SUR

Much less developed than its neighbours Benjarafe and Rincón de la Victoria, Chilches is the last stop for unspoilt, completely natural beaches along this fascinating stretch of Malaga's coast, before entering Torre de Benagalbón, Rincón de la Victoria and eventually the eastern suburbs of Malaga city.

For unspoilt and award-winning beaches with a large dose of history, train stations and watch towers still providing reminders of the past, a visit to some or all of the N340's lesser-known beaches is well worth the effort. Buses from Malaga have replaced the train service and stop at all the aforementioned places.



The Almayate Osborne bull. :: SUR



The dog beach in Torre del Mar. :: SUR

## THE AXARQUÍA

- ▶ **Chilches.** The first 'out of town' beach after Malaga.
- ▶ **Benjarafe.** Popular among local and national celebrities and famous for award-winning beaches and restaurants.
- ▶ **Valle Niza.** Relaxed chiringuitos and wide beaches.
- ▶ **Almayate.** Fields give way to beaches and hidden beach bars.
- ▶ **Torre del Mar.** Near the Río Vélez is best for dogs.



Almayate beach looking towards Valle Niza. :: SUR

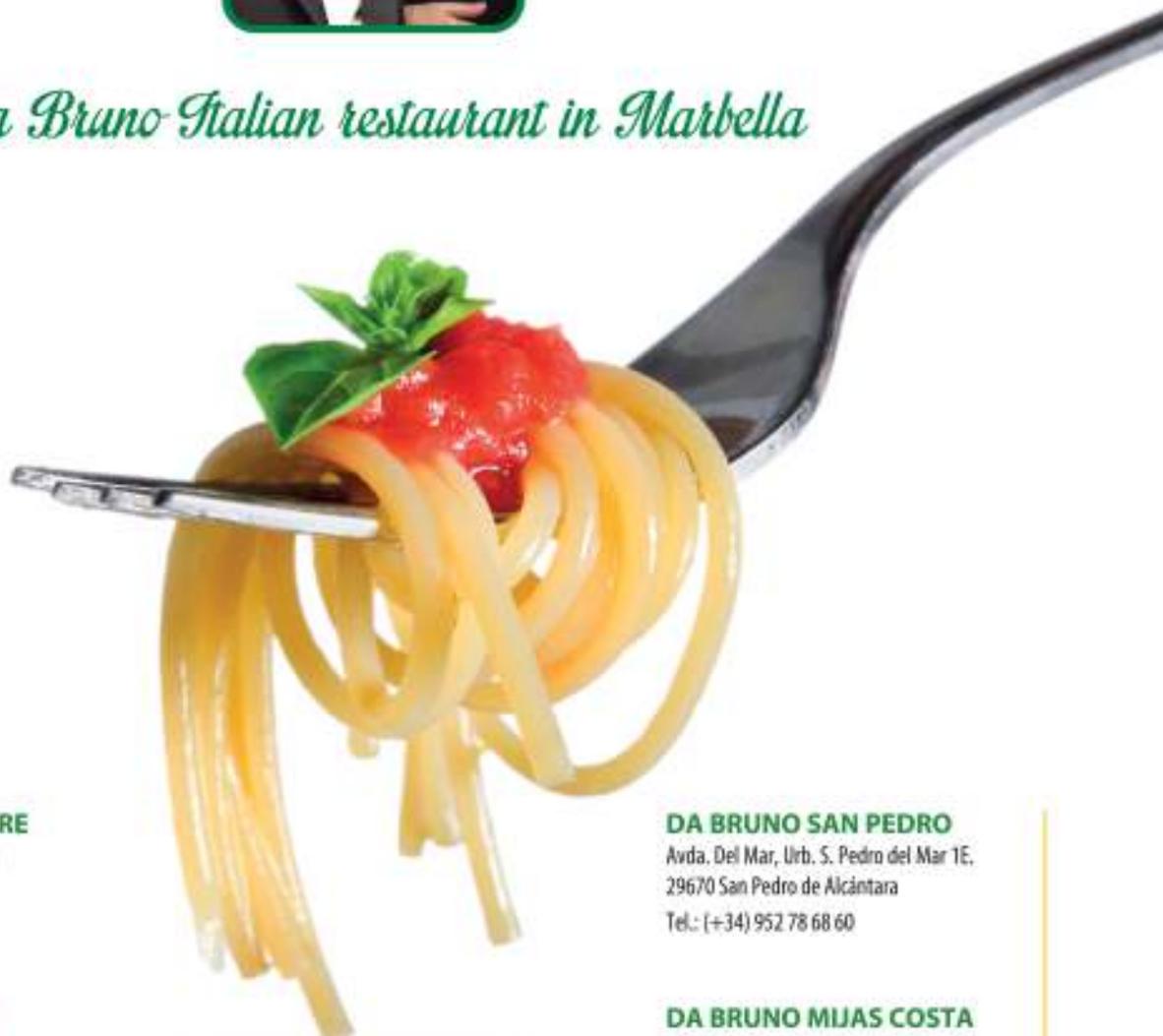
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# Money, money, money... always sunny... in the rich man's world

## The beautiful sea reflects a world of luxury with a millionaire's appeal

A playground for the rich and famous, a stage set to enact life as a millionaire - even just for a day, a battlefield for the wealthy; Marbella is more than just a 'holiday in the sun' destination

**RACHEL ARMSTRONG**

With its enviable micro-climate, diverse beaches and stunning views across the Mediterranean Sea, it is not difficult to see why Marbella attracts so many tourists.

But, aside from daytime tanning sessions and traditional chiringuitos (typical beachside eatery or bar) serving tapas and tinto, Marbella boasts another string to its bow as a celebrity party hotspot.

Events such as the Marbella Luxury Weekend, which took place in Puerto Banús at the beginning of June, epitomise the affluence - and some may say,

pretentiousness - that Marbella is so famous for. Walk along the port itself on a 'normal' day during summer and the extravagant yachts, boats and super cars will drown you in opulence.

### Famous faces

Having been a top choice of holiday destination for celebrities over the years, Marbella is the place to be to catch sight of footballers and TV personalities. Peter Andre, Baywatch legend Pamela Anderson, and reality TV stars Abbie Holborn and Megan McKenna are just a few names to have graced the Marbella sands already this summer.

Glenn Ward, founder of Things2Do Marbella, said it's "the nightlife and beach clubs" that attract people nowadays, as well as "the diversity of Mar-



Yachts line up in Puerto Banús, which acts

bella and the mix of nationalities".

Talking about the type of 'stars' who tend to visit, he said, "In the 60s, 70s, and 80s we had royalty visiting Marbella almost, and true stars roaming the ports. We do still have a lot of this now but it's generally overshadowed by the TOWIE wannabes; it's become a Mecca for people who like to be extravagant (without class)."

It is difficult to talk about Marbella these days without some refer-

ence to TV shows such as TOWIE (The Only Way is Essex) and, more recently, Life on Marbs, cropping into the conversation. Of course, whether the perception of 'Marbs' that is generated from the publicity of such 'celebrities' is beneficial for the local community or not divides

opinion. Lina Hodgkins, Marketing Director for Linekers Group loves the tourists and "watching them have a great time". She said: "I am sure it's a mixed reaction from different residents, but without the tourists Marbella wouldn't be what it is today; you only have to look at the winter months to realise how quiet it is here when



Pamela Anderson in Marbella. :: J. L.



as a magnet for those with money to spend. :: R. ARMSTRONG

there are no tourists.”

The 56-year-old looks forward to the summer months every year. Having lived on the Costa for 14 years after she “came on holiday and fell in love with Marbella”, Lina is a huge fan of the big opening parties and can’t wait to see the effort people make to dress up in line with the colour codes this summer.

“Although there are some extremely wealthy people living here and the port and boats make it extremely attractive for the rich and famous,” Lina doesn’t view Marbella as a millionaire’s paradise. In fact, it is the accessibility that she thinks is the main attraction for tourists these days.

“Marbella is accessible to all, regardless of wealth and background as all regional airports in the UK fly to Malaga these days,” she said.

Another real lover of summer in Mar-

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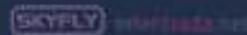
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One of Marbella's popular summer themed parties at La Sala by the Sea.

•• SUR

bella is Sandro Morelli, owner of Villa Tiberio on the Golden Mile, and he agrees that the tourists help to make it so special.

“The best industry in the world is the tourists - they come, go, are happy to be here and provide wealth for restaurants, hotels and shops,” he said. Sandro has welcomed the likes of Sean Connery, Prince Rainier of Monaco and the King of Saudi Arabia (among many others, photos of whom adorn the Tiberio walls) into his restaurant over the years and had television crew there earlier this month filming for an ITV show.

### Splashing out in Marbs

Marbella attracts men and women of all ages, a lot of whom seem to save up a small fortune to splash out in ‘Marbs’, whether it be on golfing, beach clubs or exclusive opening parties. Louisa Garrett, 24, from Northern Ireland, has been to Marbella seven times over the past few years and admits that she can’t get enough of the bars, restaurants and, in particular, events such as the Ocean Club Champagne Spray. She said, “There is so much luxury and wealth which makes it great for people-watching and window-shopping!”

Kara Jaye, who owns The Boardwalk restaurant in Marbella with her twin sister, describes summer in Marbella as “showy, fabulous and trendy”. Why? “The lifestyle, the luxury and opulence, and most of all the chance to show off your wealth - this seems



A glitzy show at Marbella's new Club Teatro. •• JOSELE-LANZA

to be what most ‘millionaires’ come here for!”

Originally from London, the 32-year-old loves the “buzz” of summer in Marbella and this year she is particularly looking forward to a new “super club” that has just opened its doors in Puerto Banús.

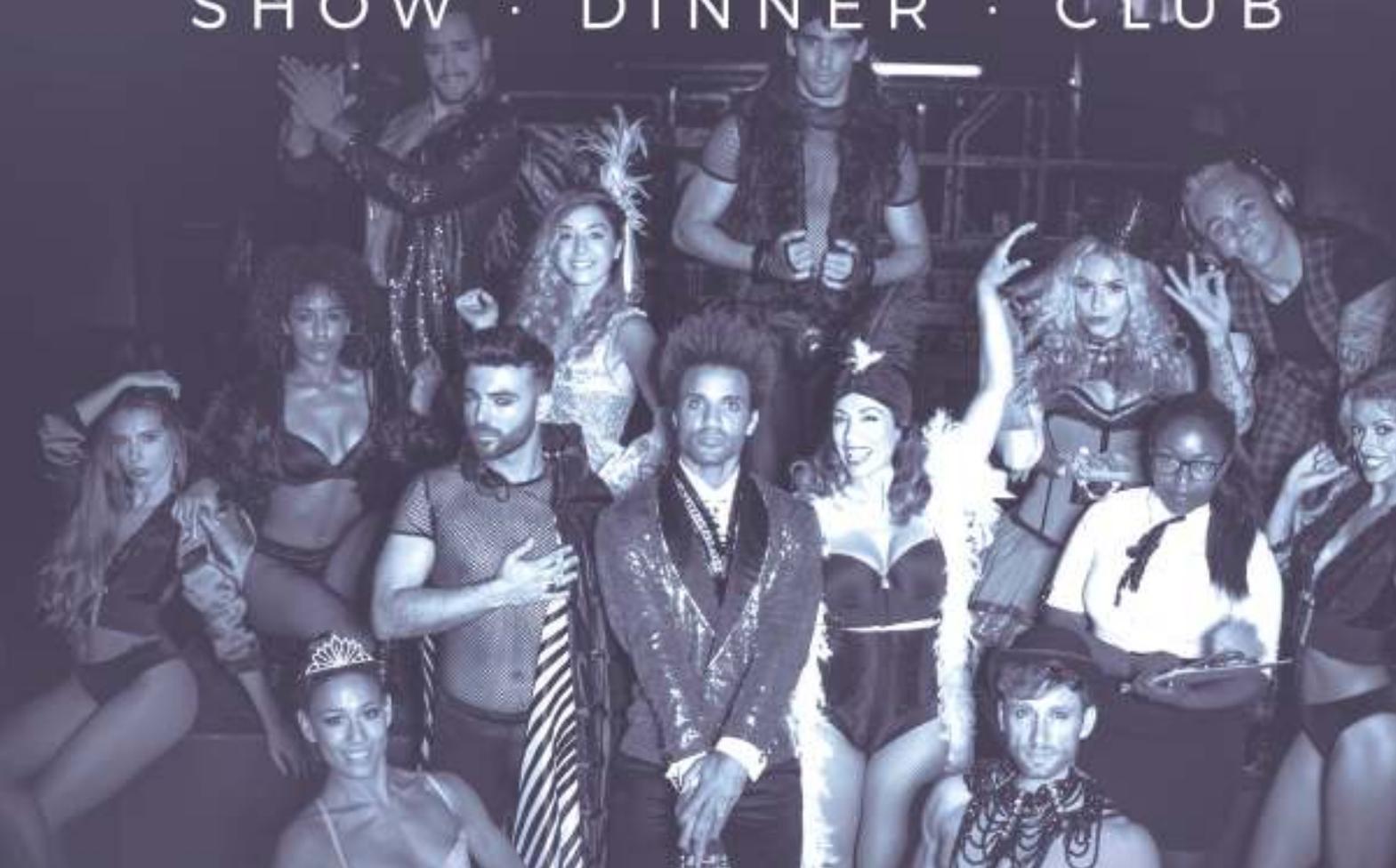
She refers to Marbella as the “it” place in Spain, where competition is rife “to be better, richer and more successful than the rest”. And she wouldn’t change it if she could.

Love it or loathe it, there is no denying that Marbella is a headline-grabbing destination. And even more so during summer when tourists flock from all over the world with intentions to spend, spend, spend. Great news for local businesses...

From sun-worshippers and avid golfers, to hard-core party animals and celebrity stalkers, Marbella offers something for everyone - including the chance to live life on the red carpet, even just for a day or two.

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# Bathing the natural way

## The Costa del Sol boasts numerous nudist beaches that attract both local residents and visitors

Fifty years ago, it would have been unthinkable, but now there are nudist zones at the heart of the most popular tourism resorts such as Torremolinos

**PATRICK STAMANN**

For some it is taboo, for others a philosophy of life: naked bathing produces very divided opinions. Some love it and do it whenever they can; others do not, but basically it is tolerated. On the Costa del Sol, some naturist beaches have been established since the fall of the Franco regime, and over the years other places have opened their doors for fans of what is known in some parts of the world as “free body culture”. There is now even an associa-

tion which provides information on the latest news and upcoming events on its website [www.anna-nudismo.es](http://www.anna-nudismo.es).

Nevertheless, places where you can bathe and sunbathe without clothing are mostly secluded, beyond the densely popular, extensive beaches of Torremolinos or Fuengirola. They do not always have the same facilities as you might find on textile beaches, but many of the visitors like to be in close contact with nature and can easily cope with this lack of amenities. For many an informal atmosphere free from restricting clothing makes up for a lack of bars and services.

### Beaches along the western Costa

The Playa de San Julián in Guadalmar is located in the urban area of the provincial capital near the airport and the Guadalmar residential estate on the border with Torremolinos. This open

beach stretches between the mouth of the Guadalhorce river and the golf course, and is indicated by appropriate signs.

You won't find too many visitors here, even in the summer, although it is very easy to get to. For visitors coming with their own vehicle, parking is available, and there are bus stops not too far away. A chiringuito provides refreshment for bathers in summer. Showers, litter bins, a public telephone and cleaning services all contribute to a pleasant day by the sea. Access is via N-340 or A-7 via the exit 232 San Julián / Guadalmar. From there, a road runs parallel to the motorway, until a sandy path branches off to the car parks at the beach.

On the beach of the Torrequebrada estate in Benalmádena, you find the Playa Benalnatura, hidden in a small bay several metres below the national

**Take note**

**Playa Benalnatura.** The extremely friendly and family atmosphere in the lovingly maintained bay is not only pleasant, but also gives a bit of security from uninvited guests such as voyeurs or thieves.

**PATRICK STAMANN**

road N-340. Because of its small dimensions, it can get crowded on summer weekends here. However the cosy and pleasant ambience attracts regular visitors all year round to this stretch of beach where nude bathing is compulsory.

The nudist association Benalnatura itself takes care of the beach and also runs the chiringuito and maintains the rest of the facilities such as showers, toilets, a barbecue, benches and tables, litter bins and ashtrays as well as trees and other plants. Driving from Fuengirola, take the N-340 to Benalmádena, pass the Torrequebrada casino and exit the first roundabout, heading towards the beach. The small road you turn onto also runs in the direction of Benalmádena, but parallel to the N-340. After 100 metres a sign between residential blocks points to the access via stairs to the bay. You can get there by bus from Malaga, Torremolinos or Fuengirola or by car early in the morning, otherwise parking can be difficult.

Continuing towards Marbella, the next nudist beach is the one-kilometre-long Playa Marina between La Cala and El Faro in Mijas Costa. Access to the sea from this sandy beach is a bit bumpy, as the ground is covered by rocks. The beach has, however, all the amenities that guarantee a nice day in the sun: a chiringuito provides refreshment, sunloungers and parasols are available as well as toilets, showers and bins. You can get there by taking the N-340 road towards Marbella. Use the Playa Marina exit to get to the car park. Pedestrians reach the beach crossing the bridge over the highway. There are also buses from Fuengirola, Malaga or Marbella.

**A nudist's Mecca**

If you continue westwards, you will come to Cabopino and Artola, once you have pas-

sed Calahonda. This narrow, open and elongated dune beach, which was declared a natural monument two years ago, is lined with pine trees and protected by wooden footpaths. Even in summer, it is not overcrowded, and is particularly popular with homosexuals. The transition from the adjacent textile beach is indicated by a simple sign. Restaurants, first aid stations and toilets can be found on the textile side, but not on the nudist beach.

You can get to this beach heading west on the N-340 from Fuengirola. Once you have past Calahonda, exit at Cabopino and just follow the signs. Cross the highway on the bridge and turn right at the next roundabout. Just a few metres further along you are led to an enormous car park. From there you have to follow a wide wooden foot-

path down to the sea. Private vehicles were banned from this area some time ago. At the bottom, you have to decide: wearers of bikinis and swimming trunks go left, nudists turn right.

**No need to dress up**

Driving further towards Cadiz, nudists also have their space at Estepona, Playa Arroyo Vaquero Costa Natura. The beach is quite narrow, but more than three kilometres long and even in the summer not overrun. The residential buildings behind it do not limit nude bathing. Chiringuitos, sunbeds, litter bins, showers and regular beach cleaning ensure a pleasant stay, and signs clarify that the nude bathing paradise is limited to some 300



The beach of Guadalmar is never crowded, not even in summer. :: SUR



The beach of Almayate is very close to a nudist campsite. :: SUR

metres. This area stretches alongside the naturist hotel complex Costa Natura ([costanatura.com](http://costanatura.com)), which is also open to non-resident customers. To get to Playa Arroyo Vaquero, exit the N-340 about one kilometre before Estepona, following the sign at a roundabout. There are several free and guarded car parks belonging to the hotel complex. This nudist spot is very popular with international naturists.

### The eastern Costa del Sol

But also the eastern part of this beautiful coast offers nudism lovers many opportunities to take off all their clothes. Only a short distance from the provincial capital lies the small and pretty Playa El Candado next to the marina of the same name. The beach is equipped with showers and toilets as well as a sunbathing and parasol rental service, and in the summer lifeguards ensure the safety of the bathers. The sandy beach, which is only 200 metres long, is quickly crowded due to its reduced dimensions and the proximity to the city of Malaga. Parking is available nearby, but you can also go by bus to avoid parking problems.

### Beach and campsite

Further east, in Vélez-Málaga's district of Torre del Mar lies the Playa Almayate, a long sandy beach, which is officially declared as a nude bat-

hing zone, although it is also a sought-after destination to numerous textile bathers. The latter have therefore extended their space. The beach is always very well kept and enjoys great popularity in good weather.

To get there, take the N-340 national road towards Nerja and take the exit just before Almayate. At the go-kart track, turn right onto a sandy track. The nudist beach starts behind the chiringuito. Parking is also available at the nudist Almanat campsite ([www.almanat.es](http://www.almanat.es)), which is reached by going straight on at the kart track. To get to the beach, you cross some grain fields. The campsite offers bungalows, a restaurant, a sauna and a swimming pool.

Take the opportunity to bathe naked on the beautiful, 350-metre-long Playa Cala del Pino which is visited by both textile and nudist bathers. The ambience is characterised by tolerance among both groups. You can get there via the N-340. Exit behind Maro at the sign saying 'Torre del Pino', where you can park in a canyon not far from the road. The walk down to the beach takes you about five minutes.

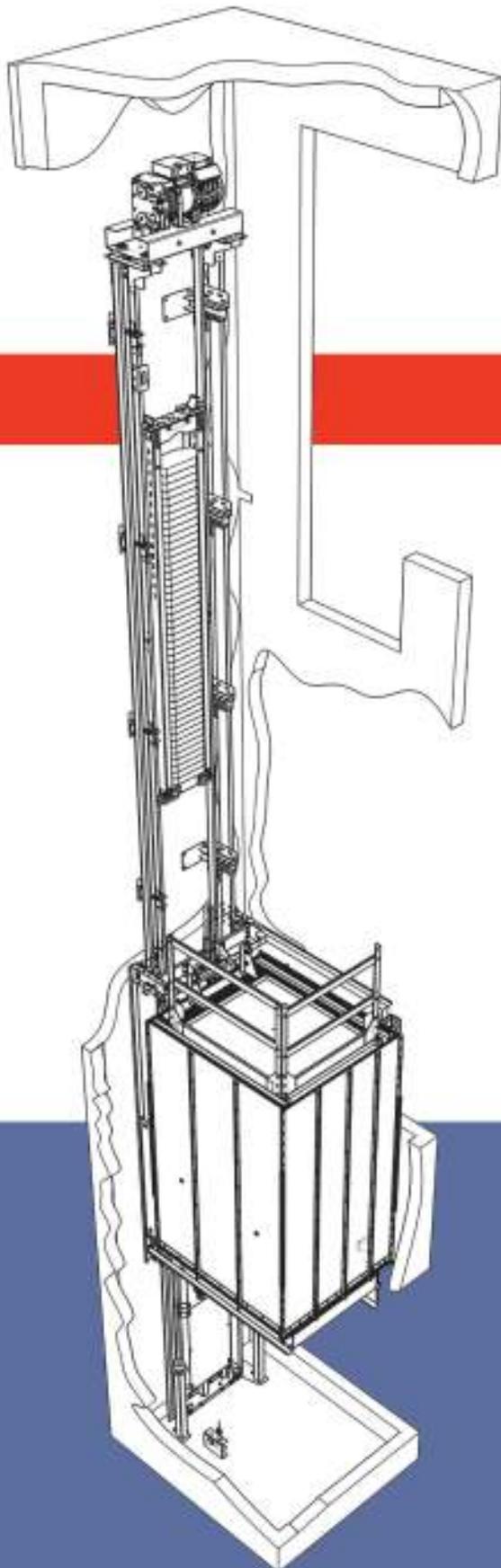
And close to the provincial border, we come to the Playa Cantarrián in Almuñécar. The bay where it stretches



Cabopino, Marbella. :: SUR

is divided into two sections: one is a mixed beach while the other one is a pure naturist zone. In the first there are two chiringuitos, as well as showers and beach loungers. To get there, take the N-340 from Nerja to Almuñécar and exit at the Mirador de Cerro Gordo a few kilometres before reaching the town. In the low season, it is possible to take the car down to the bay while shuttle buses operate between the upper parking area and the chiringuitos during the summer.

As you see, the Costa del Sol has also opened its doors to naturism and offers numerous opportunities to enjoy this particular way to feel free not only on the beach, but also in hotels.



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# Summer thrills and skills on the water

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Kitesurfing and cable skiing are among the sports that continue to grow, with more organisations offering lessons in English than ever before

**KISHAN VAGHELA**

Watersports feature among the most diverse and wide-ranging opportunities available to visitors and residents of all ages on the Costa del Sol. With favourable weather conditions an almost guaranteed supplement, cable skiing, kitesurfing and diving, among many other activities continue to attract novices and enthusiasts from across the province.

## **Kitesurfing**

One watersport that has undoubtedly evolved in recently years along the Andalusian coastline is kitesurfing, while there has been a commensurate increase in kitesurfing schools and International Kiteboarding Organization (IKO) instructors on the Costa del Sol, especially in the last five years. Kitesurfing lessons for children as young as eight who are accompanied by an adult take place at the Freedom Kite School in Estepona and in Tarifa in Cádiz, just one of the companies which has welcomed kitesurfers and windsurfers alike for a few decades now, depending on the height of the waves and wind conditions.

The sport sees aspects of other watersports such as wakeboarding, windsurfing and surfing, as well as



Tarifa is a favourite location for kitesurfers. :: SUR

more indoor activities such as gymnastics brought together.

Lessons can be given in English, French and Spanish.

CoolHot Kite School also offer lessons in both Tarifa and Malaga for people of all abilities in El Candado, with private, semi-private and individual classes usually lasting between two to four hours for one or two days.

### Diving

Those who prefer to spend more time under the water and simultaneously explore some of the magnificent marine life in the Costa's waters. The Punto Atalaya and Arrecife and Las Bovedas are just some of the famous dive sites which diving companies in the area make use of. Simply Diving's two centres in Marbella and Torremolinos have both been ac-



Competing in Tarifa. :: SUR

credited with the PADI 5 Star Career Development and IDC Dive Centre award from the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) and are the only British-run centre of this kind in Spain.

An international team of PADI instructors can lead scuba divers through courses which take place in over 100 different dive sites on the Costa del Sol.

The Costa del Sol can offer various other locations to learn scuba diving, such as through another five-star dive centre, the Abyss diving school in Fuengirola. Not only does it offer various dive trips to Marbella and the Straits of Gibraltar, but a wide range of PADI courses, including a first aid programme, and open water diving course and training to become a rescue diver.

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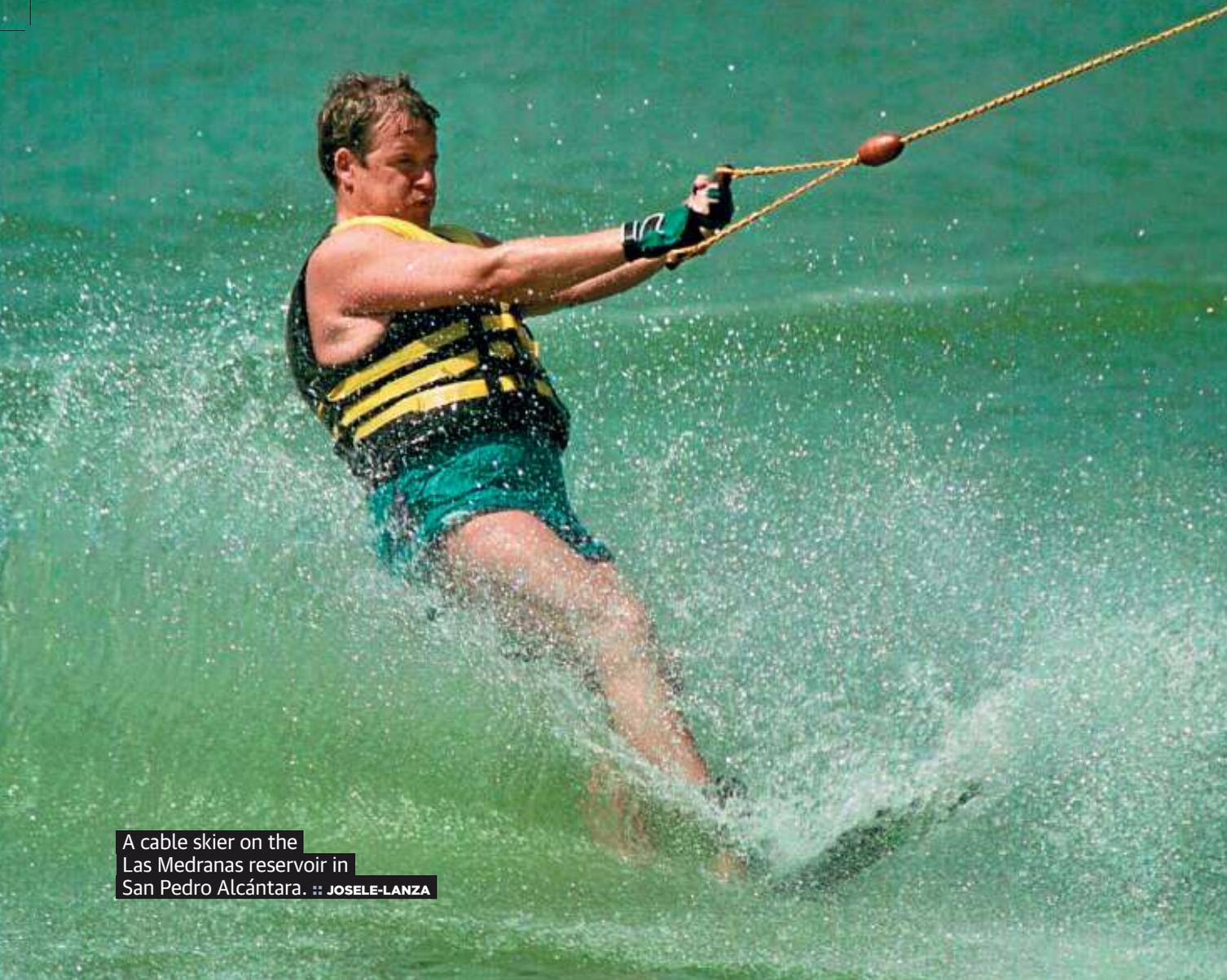
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A cable skier on the Las Medranas reservoir in San Pedro Alcántara. :: JOSELE-LANZA

### Cable Skiing

Cable skiing is a form of water skiing, with the difference from the traditional sport being an electric cable that pulls the skier's rope as opposed to a motorboat. The watersports centre on Las Medranas reservoir in Marbella is the only centre to offer cable ski lessons to those keen to try the sport over the age of ten on the Costa del Sol.

The centre gives lessons between 11am and 3pm and 4pm to 8:30pm, although those timings are subject to change depending on sunlight.

### Costa Jump

The water can also provide a fun activity for children thanks to Costa-Jump. While the company are known for the trampoline parks on land in Marbella and soon in Malaga city, Costa Jump have taken the initiative to place floating parks in the sea for children to begin their adventures in the water.

### Sailing

Of all the watersport courses available this summer, none can match the diverse locations that the Royal



Divers take to the waters. :: SUR

Yachting Association Sailing School in Sotogrande can offer.

A centre of the UK's national governing body for sailing, it offers lessons which see learners enter British, Spanish and Moroccan ports, as well as the Straits of Gibraltar to gain knowledge of the tidal aspects that come with sailing.

### CONTACTS

#### ► Freedom Kite School:

Telephone: 610 89 91 65  
[www.kitesurfestepona.com/costa-del-sol-kite-school/index.html](http://www.kitesurfestepona.com/costa-del-sol-kite-school/index.html)

#### ► Simply Diving :

Telephone: 600 50 65 26  
[www.simplydiving.com/contact/](http://www.simplydiving.com/contact/)

#### ► Wakeboard Center Marbella:

Telephone: 952 78 55 79  
[www.cableskimarbella.es/en/](http://www.cableskimarbella.es/en/)

#### ► RYA Sailing School Sotogrande:

Telephone: 680 681233  
[www.yachtingsotogrande.com](http://www.yachtingsotogrande.com)

## THE VITHAS XANIT HOSPITAL, SAFETY AND QUALITY

The Vithas Xanit international hospital, which is part of the Vithas health group and is accredited by Joint Commission International, is the benchmark private hospital on the Costa del Sol. The hospital is situated in Benalmádena, just 15 minutes from Málaga, and offers a wide range of services including more than 40 medical and surgical specialities. It includes two major departments: the Vithas Xanit Oncology Institute and the Heart Unit.

The Vithas Xanit hospital has now obtained an accreditation for safety and quality from the Joint Commission International (JCI) for the second time, and it is one of just 10 hospitals in Spain with this accreditation. Joint Commission International is the leading entity in the world in evaluating and accrediting the standards of quality in medical centres.

The Vithas Xanit International Hospital was accredited for the first time



VITHAS XANIT

Vithas Xanit International in Benalmádena . :: VITHAS XANIT

in 2014 and this has now been renewed by the organisation, which is the most prestigious of its type in the world. It is a division of Joint Commission Healthcare Organisations (JCAHO), which aims to improve the quality of service in the international community by facilitating accreditation all over the world.

Vithas Xanit has an International Services Department which attends to

patients of more than 115 nationalities in 16 languages, including English, Chinese, German, Swedish, Danish, Finnish, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Arabic etc. The team is specially trained to adapt to the needs and the culture of foreign patients and works in coordination with the different departments of the hospital to ensure that patients and their families receive excellent medical assistance.

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# Seaside devotion

## Ten curious facts about the origins and history of the Carmen festivities

The month of July sees the most cheerful of religious festivals, a procession that involves sun, sea and sand and whose history involves a garden in Israel and an English saint

**JESÚS HINOJOSA**

July 16th is the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, known in Spain as the festival of the Virgen del Carmen. On this day, in towns along the coast, the image of this Virgin is carried in procession through the streets and often taken into the sea or, watched by hundreds of people on the seafront promenades, the beaches or from brightly decorated fishing boats close to the shore.

Devotion to the Virgen del Carmen is very deep-seated in Malaga province.

She is the patron of sailors and fishermen, hence her popularity in coastal regions, but some inland churches also house a statue of this Virgin; the faithful pray to her all year round, but especially so at this time of year. Pictures and images of her can also be found in private homes, hospitals and fish stalls in local markets.

Visitors enjoy the festivities on 16 July each year, but may not know much about the history behind them. Here are some facts that shed more light on the origins of this summer tradition.

### 1. A religious order whose origins lie in Israel

The origins of the devotion to the Virgen del Carmen lie with a group of hermits in the 12th century who, inspired by the prophet Elias, went into retreat on Mount Carmel, which was considered the garden of Israel. In fact, 'karmel' means 'garden'. They built a chapel among their cells, and dedicated it to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. This movement was the origin of the Carmelite religious orders.

### 2. Why does the festival take place on 16 July?

According to Carmelite tradition, on 16 July 1251 Our Lady of Mount Carmel appeared to Saint Simon Stock, an English prior general of the Order, and gave him his habit and the Brown Scapular, which are now the principal vestments of Carmelite worship.

### 3. Origins of devotion in Malaga

The origins of devotion to the Virgen del Carmen in Malaga date back to the time when the Carmelite convents were founded there after the reform by St Teresa de Jesús. In 1584 the San Andrés convent was founded; that has now become the main church in the Perchel district of the city. The Carme-

The Virgen del Carmen sets sail in El Palo, Malaga. :: sur





The Virgen del Carmen is carried back up the beach after a dip in the sea. :: SUR



Celebrations in Rincón de la Victoria and Malaga city. :: E. C. / SUR



lite monks had to move out in 1835 because of Mendizábal's ecclesiastical confiscations and didn't return to the city until the 1940s.

After overcoming some challenging problems, they took over what is now the church of Stella Maris, in the Alameda Principal. Nowadays the church, which is dedicated to the Virgen del Carmen, is run by Claretian priests.

In 1585, a year after the first Carmelite monastery was founded in Malaga, a community of Discalced Carmelites was founded by San Juan de la Cruz. This monastery is still open, and is situated in El Molinillo district.

#### 4. Patron saint of sailors

In Spain in the Middle Ages the name 'María' was thought to mean 'star of the sea', from the Latin 'stella maris'. From that time onwards the Carmelites have acclaimed this Virgin as the 'Flower of Carmel' and 'Star of the Sea'. This was due to a prayer which is attributed to St Simon Stock:

"O beautiful Flower of Carmel, most fruitful vine, Splendour of Heaven, holy and singular, who brought forth the Son of God, still ever remaining a Pure Virgin, assist me in this necessity. O Star of the Sea, help and protect me!"

In the 18th century, when the Virgen del Carmen festival was already very popular in Spain, an admiral from



Going out to sea in Pedregalejo, Malaga. :: EDUARDO NIETO

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On El Cable beach, Marbella. :: J-L

Mallorca, Antonio Barceló Pont de la Terra, who was born in 1716 and died in 1797, encouraged the sailors for whom he was responsible to pray to this Virgin. It was then that the Spanish navy changed its patron saint from San Telmo to the Virgen del Carmen. Fishermen also adopted her as their patron saint.

### 5. Devotion linked with death

The devotion to the Virgen del Carmen is also associated with the moment of death. In Carmelite tradition, when she appeared to St Simon Stock, the Virgin gave him the scapular which has been the emblem of the Carmelite order ever since, and told him that anyone who died wearing it would not go to hell and their soul would be saved.

For this reason, in November each year religious services are held to pray for the souls of people who have died, and are dedicated to the Virgen del Carmen.

### 6. Underwater grotto

One of the most unusual aspects of devotion to the Virgen del Carmen in Malaga is the image which is kept all year round in an underwater grotto off La Malagueta beach. An association of divers was set up in 1998 to look after the figure.

The first time this Virgen del Carmen was taken to the grotto was on 8 December 1981, following a promise made by a submariner whose life had been in danger due to an accident at work. The image, made in bronze from the propellers of old ships, is taken from the sea

on the Sunday after 16 July each year for a Mass at the San Gabriel church. In the evening a procession takes place along the seafront, meeting up with the image of the Virgen del Carmen from Perchel, before the figure is returned to her shrine under the sea at La Malagueta.

### 7. Numerous images in Malaga city

There are numerous images of the Virgen del Carmen in the city of Malaga alone. In addition to the one in the Perchel district which was canonically

crowned in 2004, and the one kept in the underwater grotto, which are mentioned above, there are others in Huelin, El Palo, Pedregalejo, Olías, Stella Maris, Colonia de Santa Inés and Campanillas, another one at San Pio X (Virreina) and one in the Santos Mártires church which is not taken out in procession, but for whom a 'kissing of the hands' is organised.

### 8. Passionist version

There is also a Passionist version of this Virgin in Malaga, called Nuestra Señora del Carmen Doloroso, to whom the Corpus Christi church in Pedregalejo is dedicated.

### 9. Patron of different towns

The Virgen del Carmen is also the patron saint of different towns within the diocese of Malaga, especially along the coast. Although there has been great devotion to her for a long time, her official designation as patron saint is relatively recent. In the case of Marbella, she was proclaimed as such by the present bishop, Jesús Catalá, in 2012.

Estepona celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Virgen del Carmen being its patron saint last year; the image was canonically crowned by bishop Antonio Dorado in 2005. She is also considered a patron saint of Torremolinos, where there is an image of her in a church in La Carihueta district, and she is also popular in Fuengirola, where she is taken out in procession, and in Torre del Mar, in Vélez-Málaga.

### 10. Devotion in inland towns

Although there is widespread devotion to the Virgen del Carmen along the coastline, which is to be expected as she is the patron saint of sailors and fishermen, this is also the case in several towns and villages inland.

One example is Montecorto near Ronda, where a festival is held in her honour every year.

In Antequera the Virgen del Carmen is carried in procession from the church of the same name, whose architecture is one of the finest examples of Andalusian Baroque.

## FAIRS

- ▶ **El Palo.** Four days of events start on 12 July in the Real de la Feria.
- ▶ **Rincón de la Victoria.** From 13 to 17 July, the town of Rincón celebrates with children's activities, concerts and cultural masterclasses.
- ▶ **La Carihueta.** A traditional fair in honour of the patron saint from 14 to 16 July. Beach games, shows, an orchestra and dancing.
- ▶ **Los Boliches.** From 13 to 16 July Fuengirola celebrates with lots of events and a fair in the Recinto Ferial.

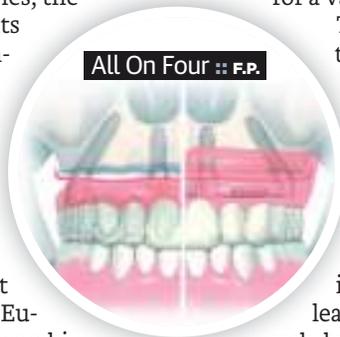
## PROCESSIONS 16 JULY

- ▶ **Axarquía.** Almayate; Benajafefe; Caleta de Vélez; La Cala del Moral; Las Melosas; Nerja; Rincón de la Victoria.
- ▶ **Malaga.** Campanillas; Colonia de Santa Inés; El Palo; El Perchel; Guadalmar; Huelin; Olías; Pedregalejo.
- ▶ **Costa del Sol.** Estepona; La Cala de Mijas; La Carihueta (Torremolinos); Los Boliches; Manilva; Marbella; San Pedro de Alcántara.

## AT THE FOREFRONT OF DENTAL HEALTH

The standard of odontology in Spain is one of the most advanced in Europe. The professionalism of Spanish dentists makes the quality of dental treatment in this country one of the highest on the continent. If, in addition to this, we add that the quality-price relationship is better than in the rest of European countries, the result is satisfied patients who have decided to travel to Spain to be treated by professionals here with the highest guarantees of quality.

Also, the Costa del Sol has an international airport with daily connections to the most important cities on the European continent. This, combined with low-cost air fares, means that patients of numerous nationalities come to Malaga province for treatment



All On Four :: F.P.

for a variety of dental problems. These treatments include those such as All on 4, which enables patients who have lost teeth over time, or whose teeth are in bad condition, to recover their smile in just one day. This is achieved through four implants which not only leave their teeth looking lovely but also enable them to chew again.

However, to ensure that the technique is safe and effective, it is necessary

to consult professionals, such as the Fojo y Pierini Dental Clinic, which specialises in this field. It is a modern clinic which offers the latest dental treatments and the most advanced technology, with digital radiodiagnostic equipment for orthopantomography, teleradiography, treatment for TMJ and implants. It also has two specialist departments and a sterilisation area.

And to make everything as easy and comfortable as possible, the Fojo y Pierini Dental Clinic will arrange airline tickets and accommodation for patients who travel from abroad, for the time they are undergoing treatment.



# FOJO Y PIERINI

Entrance to Fojo y Pierini Dental Clinic in Torremolinos . :: FOJO Y PIERINI

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A chiringuito advertises grilled sardines. :: J. RHODES

# The 'espeto' - simple and synonymous

**The dish should only be eaten during the months of the year with no 'r' in them, which is when they are at their tastiest and most succulent**

The humble sardine comes into its own from May to August when the smell of the 'espeto' wafts along the coast

**J. RHODES / M. D. TORTOSA**

Malaga's signature dish has gone from early royal approval to a potential candidate for an UNESCO world heritage list and its creator even has a commemorative plaque where it all started, in El Palo. The 'espeto de sardinas' is a sure sign of summer across the province and in June was even the subject of one of the Costa del Sol's famous 'rutas'.

## Food fit for a king

Summer in the many chiringuitos (beach bars) that line the Costa del Sol means one type of food: the 'espeto', sardines grilled on a cane skewer over an open fire in an old fishing boat and served up with sea salt and a slice of lemon to garnish.

While locals by now are used to seeing foreigners eating them with a knife and fork, many will tell you that the proper way to eat a sardine is by picking it up between the fingers and eating it like a slice of watermelon.

Locals will also tell you that the espeto should only be eaten in the months of the year with no 'r' in them, i.e. from May to August. This is because in the summer the sardines eat more plankton which gives them a greater layer of oil. On cooking this makes the flesh more succulent and much tastier.

The 'espetero' is the person in charge of cooking the skewered sardines in fires traditionally made in old fishing boats packed with sand. There is even a monument to the 'espetero malagueño' which can be found on the Antonio Banderas promenade to the west of Malaga city centre.



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The plaque in honour of Miguel Martínez Soler was unveiled in 2007. :: SUR

The origins of the espeto date back to 1882 when Miguel Martínez Soler, owner of the then La Gran Parada ‘merendero’ in El Palo started cooking sardines, skewered with a stick, on an open fire. When King Alfonso XII visited the bar in 1885 on an official visit to Malaga to see the destruction caused by the Christmas Day 1884 earthquake, he is said to have tried to eat the sardines with a knife and fork, to which Miguel said, “Your Majesty, not like that – with your fingers.”

The restaurant soon became famous and ‘Miguelito of the sardines’ has gone down in the Malaga history books.

There is a plaque in El Palo commemorating the ‘inventor of the espeto’. The simple preparation of one of Malaga’s most popular fish soon spread across the coast and is now synonymous with summer on the Costa del Sol.

There is some controversy as to where the sardines are caught. In theory they should come from the waters

around Malaga. However, a depletion of the species of fish has led, in recent years, to them coming from other parts of Spain, including Valencia and the north and some may say that the ‘foreign’ sardines are less tasty than the locally-caught ones.

Espetos are cooked at other times of year with many chiringuitos serving them up as early as February or March and then well into October or November, but any espeto lover will say that the best months are those without an ‘r’ in them; May, June, July and August.

Most beach bars have extended the espeto cooking method to other species



Sardines cook on their espetos over an open fire next to a beach bar.

of fish. Diners can order from a wide range of larger fish, from sea bream and sea bass to squid, cooked over the fire individually on their own cane skewers.

### UNESCO bid

The dish is so important to Malaga that at the end of May this year members of the Andalusian parliament, the Junta de Andalucía, voted in favour of trying to get UNESCO recognition on its Intangible Cultural Heritage List. Michelin-starred Malaga chef, Dani Garcia, has supported the initiative, which must be debated in Spain's national government before reaching UNESCO experts.

While Malaga waits for news from UNESCO, thousands of sardines will be eaten up and down the Costa del Sol this summer by locals and holidaymakers alike.



Espeteros thread the sardines onto canes ready for cooking. :: SUR

### TOP ESPETO TIPS

- ▶ Expect to pay between four and seven euros for around six sardines.
- ▶ Wash the espeto down with a tinto de verano - red wine mixed with lemonade or 'gaseosa'.
- ▶ Order a mixed salad or the traditional 'ensalada de pimientos', a roast red pepper, onion and tomato salad, to accompany the espeto and it should keep you going through the hot afternoon until tapas time.
- ▶ Don't worry about getting your fingers dirty - most restaurants provide individual wet wipes or, failing that, rub your fingers with a spare slice of lemon to get rid of the fishy smell.

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# The garden of the Costa

## Estepona welcomes its visitors with stunning flowers of all kinds and colours

This charming resort on the western Costa del Sol is justifiably proud of one of the most beautiful historic centres in the whole of Andalucía

**GABRIELA BERNER**

A million blooms and new flowering plants had been announced by Estepona's mayor in the month of May and he has kept his promise. Since then, the streets and paths of this welcoming town on the

western Costa del Sol, which has over 60,000 inhabitants, have been lined with even more splendid floral displays than ever, and the squares are glowing with colourful planters and pots of jasmine, oleander, hibiscus, bougainvilleas, lavender, strelizias, orange and lemon trees and many more exotic species which fill the air with their bewitching scent.

Tropical and subtropical trees and bushes provide shade in the numerous parks and green areas, among which are rubber and banana trees, towering Norfolk pines, acacias, blue flowered jacaran-

das and palm trees of all shapes and sizes. On the one hand, Estepona gives a wonderful insight into the botanical richness of the Mediterranean coast. And on the other, the town demonstrates the traditional vegetation of the Andalusian villages, particularly in the many small alleyways of the old town.

### A typical Andalusian village

While everyday life pulsates quickly and noisily in the rest of the town, time seems to have stood still in the heart of Estepona. Along streets covered with artistic cobblestones and around the cosy little squares, two-storey houses built in the typical architecture of the 18th and 19th centuries stand shoulder to shoulder.

Their whitewashed façades, gleaming windows and ornate balconies are decorated with magnificent geraniums and other attractive flowering plants in painted clay pots. In one lane the pots are purple, in the next one they are red with white dots or in the adjacent square, perhaps blue or pink, according to the tastes of the residents. All the locals are proud to take care of the display on their own façades and doorsteps and dedicate plenty of time and love to the flowers and plants which have been financed by the town hall.

The fact that they can no longer park their cars directly in front of their own front doors, but are asked to use the new parking spaces outside the old quarter, has now also been accepted, because the air has become considerably cleaner and the silence so proverbial that the splashing of the small fountains is omnipresent.

Without doubt, this unique old town has been photographed a million times, as has the Plaza del Reloj with its venerable clock tower, the remains of the 16th century castle, the archaeological museum, the market square and the monastery church Los Remedios, built in a mixture of colonial and baroque, from the 18th century.

In the course of the renovation of Estepona's old town, which also led to



Who would believe that this tiny street was full of cars just a year ago?

:: SUR

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This fantastic mural near the busy ringroad is admired by everyone. :: SUR

the renewal of all the main supply pipes, the city was able to convince almost all owners of unused and somewhat neglected properties to sell their houses or even refurbish them themselves. Some have now been converted to small hotels each with their individual charm and add to the extensive range of accommodation offered in the town.

At the edge of this unique historic centre, there is another botanical highlight: the Orchidarium. The entrance of the gigantic, egg-shaped glass dome, which stands out from the surrounding residential buildings by its futuristic look, is reached by a wide freestanding staircase in the middle of an extensive green lawned area. Inside, a dense bamboo forest provides a visual separation between the two main zones, where the most extensive collection of orchids in Europe, with 1,300 different species, can be admired.

On a 12-metre-high wall, vertical orchids and other subtropical species have been planted on five levels, aimed at forming interesting structures over time. Even if the prospect of such a huge number of orchid varieties

sounds exhausting, the range of sensory impressions makes a visit well worthwhile.

The Orchidarium is kept continually humid by three 30-metre-high waterfalls that fill the air with sparkling spray once every hour.

#### **Nature and culture**

Around the complex, a different species climbs the walls, one that needs neither water nor soil to survive. These are oversized, but deceptively realistic murals, which spread over numerous façades. They are part of the unique open-air museum of the town, which now contains nearly 40 murals created by well-known artists and, in harmony with numerous sculptures in public spaces, make it clear that culture is particularly well promoted in this strikingly well-tended community. Just a month ago, the town launched an international competition to expand this truly extraordinary collection of art.

#### **Stunning scenery**

You should also pay a visit to the Sierra Bermeja Nature Park, a favourite among nature enthusiasts, which

rises directly behind the urban area of the town to 1,450 metres above sea level. The huge mountain range gets its name from its striking red colour caused by iron oxide in the rock. It is home to innumerable endemic plants and is hoped to be upgraded to the status of a National Park soon. One of the most outstanding species found there is the famous primeval fir tree called a Pinsapo, which is in danger of extinction. Today, this extremely beautiful tree is only found in the south of Andalucía and in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

The Moroccan coastline and the Rif-Mountains look incredibly close when you are standing on top of the peaks of Sierra Bermeja, and you might even have the feeling that you can make out every stone of the rock of Gibraltar. Turning round to the other side you will enjoy one of the most spectacular views of the legendary Serranía de Ronda. This vast mountain range is covered by never-ending, lush, green forests with chestnut, pine, pinsapo, arbutus and oak along with broom and many other species.

# JOFFREY'S RESTAURANT PAR EXCELLENCE



The restaurant in La Cala de Mijas has become very popular. :: A. W.



Food with French style. :: A. W.

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The À la Carte menu has a choice of starters ranging from nine to 12 euros. Main course prices start at 17 euros and go up to 30 euros. On Wednesday there is special a two-course taster menu for 25 euros or a three-course taster menu for 29.95 euros. This menu is available every day as an 'early bird' menu from 6.30pm to 7.45pm. On 21 August a 'Black Moon' evening has been arranged where clients will be able to enjoy a five course taster menu for 65 euros. The restaurant is currently being filmed for Channel 4's programme 'A New Life in the Sun'. Camera crews will be filming all summer for the programme which will be aired in February 2018.

### Bastille Day special

On Bastille Day 14 July, Joffrey will be doing a spectacular eight course taster menu for 100 euros per person. The menu will include hot oysters, pigeon and French caviar. Book early as spaces are limited. The dinner will be accompanied by live music and the French flag will be projected on to the front of the building.

Joffrey's opens from 6pm to 10.30pm Monday to Saturday throughout July and August.

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note

**Don't miss** the information board at the cave exit. It gives a detailed idea of just how big it is and how much is still closed to visitors. If you think what you see is huge, just think that it's only one third of what has been discovered so far!

**JENNIE RHODES**

# Underground is cool

## When a trip to the beach and a dip in the sea don't seem to do the trick, visit one of Malaga province's caves to really chill out

Some of the caves open to the public in Malaga province are veritable art galleries. Rumours of buried treasure and possibilities of further discoveries make them even more fascinating

**J. RHODES / J. ALMELLONES**

Nerja's famous caves are a favourite among visitors and locals alike, while Rincón de la Victoria's Cueva del Tesoro is a relatively unknown secret, despite being the only marine cave in Europe.

### An underground favourite

Quite possibly the only places in the whole of Malaga that remain chilly, even when the temperature soars above 40, are the numerous caves the province boasts.

The most famous of the has to be the Nerja cave, or series of caves, situated to the north of the town, at the entrance to the neighbouring village of Maro.

The caves were discovered on 12 January 1959 by five local boys who had gone pot holing in the area known as 'La Mina'. They are said to have removed some stalactites, only to discover an enormous cave littered with skeletons and ceramic pots. They ran home to tell their families and friends and a later visit by scientists really unearthed the enormity and importance of the boys' discovery.

The original discoverers have met at the cave on 12 January every year, although one of them, José Luis Barbero, died in 2007. There is a sculpture commemorating the five at the entrance to the caves.

Today the Nerja cave is one of Malaga province's most visited attractions and home to the International Festival of Music and Dance which runs throughout June and July.

In fact only one third of this underground treasure trove is open to the public and scientists believe there could be more to discover. An archaeological dig is currently under way in part of the cave not open to visitors and according to the caves' chief conservationist, Luis Efrén Fernández, there is a high probability that the caves are older than currently thought. So far only evidence that Homo sapiens have used the caves, but he doesn't rule out the possibility that their history could extend as far back as Neanderthal times.

### Cascades, ghosts and cataclysms

The three sections, or 'halls', open to the public are called the Cascade Hall, the Phantom Hall and the Cataclysm Hall. The first is so called because of a series of formations, known as 'gours', which resemble a large waterfall. The phantoms that welcome visitors to the second hall are nothing more than stalagmites, but the ghostly shadows they cast on the walls of the cave give the section its eerie name. Finally the result of a huge earthquake 800,000 years ago led to a series of stalagmites and stones being thrown around the Cataclysm Hall, hence the name by which it now goes.

The caves are also a veritable art gallery, with around 320 examples of prehistoric mas-

A group of visitors is shown around the Nerja caves by a tour guide. :: J. R.





The public galleries of the Nerja caves. :: J. RHODES

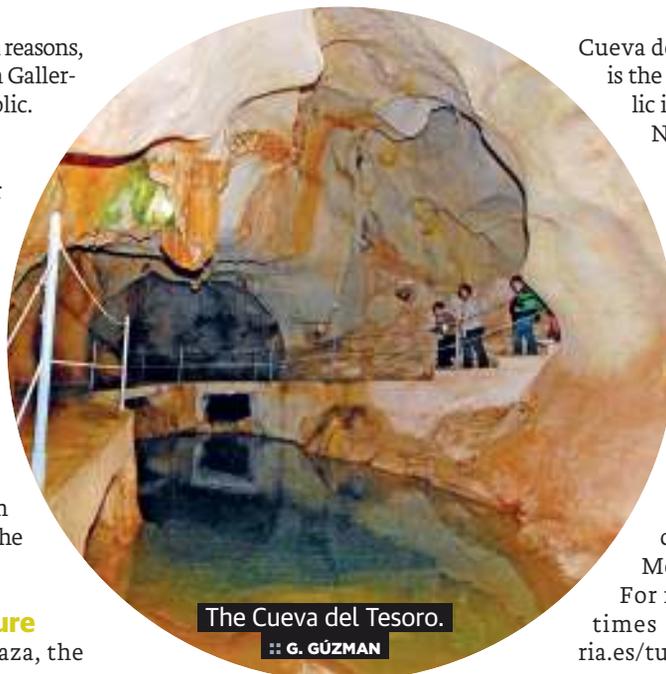
terpieces. However, for conservation reasons, the majority are located in the High Galleries and cannot be visited by the public.

### Opening times

The Nerja Caves are open all year round and in July and August the times are 9.30am to 6.30pm. Visitors are advised to book tickets in advance ([www.cuevadenerja.es](http://www.cuevadenerja.es)) and audioguides are available in six languages. Private group bookings may also be made and guided tours are available. The Cuevatren is a tourist train which operates a regular service between Nerja, the caves and Maro and buses from Malaga and Torre del Mar also go to the caves.

### Rincón de la Victoria's treasure

Discovered in 1951 by Manuel Laza, the



The Cueva del Tesoro.

:: G. GÚZMAN

Cueva del Tesoro in Rincón de la Victoria is the only marine cave open to the public in Europe. Historical artefacts from Neolithic to Islamic ceramics were found in the cave and legend has it that Muslim emperor, Tasufin Ibn Ali, hid treasure in the cave. A series of 'rooms' are named after objects and cave paintings found in them, including the Eagle Room, so called because of a figure of the bird looks like it is diving on prey from the sky, and the volcano room gets its name from its slightly higher temperature due to being the deepest part of the cave. The caves are free to visit on Mondays.

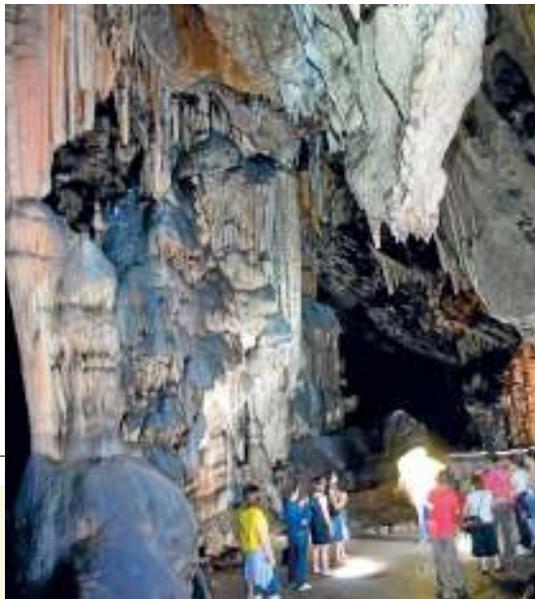
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Ardales cave. :: ÑITO SALAS

## MORE COOL CAVES

► **La Pileta (Benaoján).** This privately-owned cave has extraordinary paintings from the Upper Paleolithic period. It was discovered in 1905 by a village labourer, José Bullón Lobato. The excavations revealed ceramics, including a pendant showing the goddess Venus. The paintings show animals, in places some superimposed on others in different colours. The cave is run by the heirs of its discoverer and open to the public every day by prior reservation.



Paintings in La Pileta cave. :: SUR

► **Cueva del Gato (Benaoján).** Now a haven for potholers, for millennia this cave in the Sierra de Grazalema served as a natural refuge from the first settlers to the outlaws of the 18th and 19th centuries. The cave was formed by an underground river, the Gadaures, which flows four kilometres underground before later joining the Guadiaro. The cave can only be explored with a permit and the correct equipment, but from the outside visitors can admire the waterfall and cool, clear pool that is popular with bathers in the summer.

► **Cueva de Hundidero (Montejaque).** This cave communicates with the Cueva del Gato through a complex subterranean system. Entrance with permit only.

► **Ardales.** The Ardales cave contains cave paintings dating back to the Solutrean Age (Upper Paleolithic) around 20,000 BC, as well as an important Neolithic settlement (3,800 BC) and several Copper Age burial sites (2,700 BC). The only cave in the province to be included in the European Prehistoric Rock Art Trail. Visits by reservation only.

► **Belda (Cuevas de San Marcos).** The cave is not open to the public due to a protected colony of bats. The 'Senda de los Milenios' visitor centre has information.

► **Cueva de los Órganos (Mollina).** One of the most outstanding caves in the Sierra de la Camorra due to its size. It is 100 metres deep and a kilometre long and at-



Cueva de Belda. :: DIPUTACIÓN DE MÁLAGA

tracts potholers, especially beginners as access is easy. There are no prehistoric cave paintings but there are markings from the 18th century, and the cave is thought to have been used by the famous outlaw El Tempranillo.

► **Cueva de la Fuensanta (Igualeja).** In the Genal valley, this is the most important of a group of caves, with impressive stalagmites.

► **Cueva del Toro (Antequera).** Located in the Torcal de Antequera nature reserve, this cave has been protected as a BIC (asset of cultural interest) since February 2016. It was inhabited 7,000 years ago, as proved by the stone sculpture known as the 'Venus del Torcal', which is reminiscent of the symbol of El Torcal, the rock forma-

tion known as 'El Tornillo' (the Screw). Visits are by prior arrangement with the Torcal de Antequera Visitor Centre, which organises guided tours.

► **Las Grajas (Archidona).** In the foothills of the Sierra del Conjuero, a kilometre from the town, this cave has evidence that it was inhabited in the Middle Paleolithic. Its unusual geological formation makes it a refuge for birds.

► **Boquete de Zafarraya (Alcaucín).** This cave, on the border with Granada province, is famous for the fossilised Neanderthal bones discovered in 1983: two thigh-bones, a shinbone and the now famous jawbone.

► **Peñas de Cabrera (Casabermeja).** In the area known as Cerro Mojea, these are not deep caves but they served as a refuge for the early settlers and have valuable cave paintings from the Copper Age. The cave can be reached by a short walk.

► **Humo (Málaga).** Prehistoric remains have also been found on the coastline in La Araña, close to Rincón de la Victoria. Excavations have revealed

pieces from the Neanderthal to the Neolithic and Copper Age periods. The complex has seven sites, the most important being the Cueva del Humo. Guided tours are through the 'Yacimientos de la Araña' association.

► **Sima de las Palomas (Teba).** This cave is the most important in the area, with evidence of different prehistoric peoples. It is closed to the public.

► **Gran Duque (Casares).** In the Sierra de la Utrera there are numerous caves. This one has evidence of Neolithic inhabitants. Active tourism firms organise guided visits.

► **Cueva de Ojén.** With no evidence of prehistoric use, these caves do offer excellent views of the village and are used by locals and tourists as an ideal place to cool off in the summer.

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# The Torremolinos revival

## Torremolinos is one of the most popular tourist destinations on the Costa del Sol

Numerous new bars and restaurants have opened in Plaza Costa del Sol since it was pedestrianised in December 2015

**TONY BRYANT**

Torremolinos has long promoted its fabled reputation as one of the liveliest and most exciting towns on the Costa del Sol, and it is about to bolster this status when it receives a new fa-

celift later this year.

Following years of stagnation under the previous ruling council, Torremolinos town hall has strived to turn the town into a serious tourist destination, and they have initiated a number of strategies to regenerate the town in order to return some of the glory for which it was once renowned.

Work on the new Intu complex, set to become the biggest shopping and leisure centre on the Mediterranean coastline, will begin later this year.

The 500-million-euro project will be built on the outskirts of the town and will include landscaped botanical gardens, a resident circus, a Ferris wheel, wave pool, ski slope and an aquarium.

Torremolinos has always been popular for the seven kilometres of sandy beaches that stretch from Los Álamos to Montemar and much of the previous promotional propaganda was aimed solely at this.

However, the socialist mayor, José Ortiz, intends to inject a new lease of life into the centre, turning the Plaza Costa del Sol into the hub of the town. This was one of the key factors of the regeneration plan, because at present, the town does not have a geographical centre.

Exciting things have been planned for Torremolinos, including the renovation of the Plaza Costa del Sol and its surrounding areas, which will be given water features, decorative trees and shaded areas with seating.

Numerous new bars and restaurants have opened in the Plaza Costa del Sol since it was pedestrianised in December 2015, and now the main square has acquired the ambience of the Mediterranean pavement café society.

Meanwhile Torremolinos also has several old bodegas that still sell wine from huge oak barrels and these nostalgic establishments provide flavour of the traditional Andalusian atmosphere, especially La Campana and Bar Flores, two of the town's oldest drinking places.

Today, Torremolinos is being promoted as a serious cultural destination as well as a place to relax in the sun, and regular concerts, art exhibitions and festivals are helping the town to achieve this.

### Summer cultural programme

Torremolinos has always had a reputation of being outwardly carefree and the recent Gay Pride Festival demonstrated this. More than 40,000 people

The centre of Torremolinos has acquired a Mediterranean pavement café ambience.

**T. BRYANT**





Numerous cultural events will be staged in the Plaza La Nogalera in Torremolinos throughout the summer months. :: SUR

flock to the town for this annual event - the third biggest of its kind in Spain after Madrid and Barcelona. The colourful night club scene in La Nogalera is one of Andalucía's most popular gay hot spots and the town also boasts gay hotels, restaurants and saunas.

The Fiesta de la Virgen del Carmen is a traditional celebration held in the quaint district of La Carihuela on 16 July. The Virgin's much-loved effigy is paraded through the tiny streets, before being taken out to sea on a small boat adorned with floral decoration, accompanied by dozens of small fishing boats. The celebration, which progresses into an explosive display of passion for the Virgen del Carmen, culminates with a huge firework display.

Following the huge success of last year's summer programme, and as part of a continued drive to attract younger visitors, Torremolinos town hall has organised another series of outdoor summer events.

These will include dance spectacu-



Pride celebrations in May. :: N. SALAS

lars, folk music and flamenco shows staged in the Plaza Costa del Sol throughout the summer, as well as street theatre, cultural exhibitions and fashion shows. There will also be plenty of activities to entertain the children.

### Live music

Live entertainment has been one of the areas that the mayor, José Ortiz, has concentrated on, endorsing events such as the Rock and Roll Meeting and the Ruta del Rock.

These free events see numerous bands performing live in several of the town's squares and also give the local bar owners a chance to put on live music in their establishments.

Other regular events include the Funky Town Festival and the Black Music Festival, both held at the beginning of July. These popular music festivals create a night of nostalgia for the lovers of disco, funk, reggae and Motown.

The town continues to vibrate with more musical events throughout July

with Torroles Sound, a pop and rock concert held in La Nogalera square. Torremolinos also welcomes this year the return of Wonder Beach, a festival that presents musical events aimed at the LGBTI community.

Blues, jazz and classical music all play their part in the summer programme, with performing artists including Richard Ray Farrell, the celebrated American blues musician, who will perform in the Plaza Costa del Sol on Wednesday 19 July.

### Jazz and flamenco

A saxophone quartet made up of four musicians from Malaga will perform jazz music from the movies in Plaza

Costa del Sol on 23 Wednesday, and a series of piano concerts have been organised to take place in the Casa de Los Navajas during August.

The Flamenco Festival de Torremolinos, a night of orthodox flamenco held in the Principe de Asturias Auditorium, will take place at the end of August. This well attended event presents some of the best performers from the world of flamenco.

The live music continues in the Plaza Costa del Sol throughout September, including a concert by Mary Van Der Lent, a Spanish singer who will perform acoustic versions of classic rhythm and blues songs, and The Harlettes, a popular boogie band that play

Motown and soul music.

Towards the end of September, the town gears up for its annual pilgrimage and feria in name of its patron saint, St Michael the Archangel, locally known as San Miguel. The pilgrimage, which attracts an estimated 200,000 people, takes place in the pine woods next to the fairground on Sunday 24 September. The fair follows on 27 September and continues until 1 October.

### INFORMATION

► [www.torremolinos.es](http://www.torremolinos.es)

The Romería de San Miguel attracts thousands of visitors in September. :: SUR





Calle San Miguel is the most popular street on the Costa del Sol. :: TONY BRYANT

# The Costa del Sol's favourite holiday high street

**During the 1960s and 70s, Torremolinos became extremely chic and Calle San Miguel acquired the ambience of Carnaby Street**

Calle San Miguel has not always been a thriving centre of commercial activity; it was once a narrow residential street

**TONY BRYANT**

Calle San Miguel in Torremolinos is one of the best-known streets on the Costa del Sol, and it has become the focal point of the town, especially for those visiting for the first time.

Formerly open to traffic, it was pedestrianised in 1971 and has since become a popular shopping destination for the thousands of tourists who visit Torremolinos every year.

It has long been famed for cheap cigarettes, jewellery, leather goods and souvenirs and, although the shops have changed with the times, it is still a street of much commercial activity.

During the 1960s and 70s, Torremolinos became extremely chic and Calle San Miguel acquired the ambience of Carnaby Street. This was a period when certain fashions were only available in either London, or the trendy boutiques found in Calle San Miguel and its surrounding passageways.

However, Calle San Miguel has not always been the thriving centre of commercial activity, for it was once a narrow residential street whose ramshackle houses and hidden patios were destroyed for the tourist invasion of the late 1950s.

## **The tower**

The Torre de los Molinos (Pimentel Tower), which still commands the end of Calle San Miguel, was the site of the first stable settlement in the town. The San Miguel church, which has recently been completely refurbished, sits at the bottom of the street, next to the tower. The original chapel was erected in 1718, although the present church was built on the same site in 1896.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Plaza San Miguel was the main artistic centre of Torremolinos and several noted painters had their studios in the square. Pablo Picasso's aunt, who was born in Torremolinos in 1863, lived in a small dwelling that sat on the corner of Calle Casa Blanca and Calle San Miguel.

At this time, Calle San Miguel was a

winding cobbled street that was lined with the typical whitewashed houses with red tiled roofs, and this was pretty much how it stayed until the 1950s.

**The first tourists**

The arrival of the 1950s brought the first tourists and this is when things began to change, although not at the hands of developers, but under the intuition of the residents.

Some of the locals turned their one-room homes into shops selling candy, cigarettes and chewing gum and this was the beginning of the bustling commercial scene the street is famous for today.

Towards the end of the 1950s, the street had changed considerably, although it still had a time-worn ambience. The 1960s was to be the decade in which Calle San Miguel changed the most and the arrival of the film stars, artists, beatniks and hippies pinned the street firmly on the map.

The small alleyways that lead off Calle San Miguel are now filled with boutiques and shops selling anything from fine porcelain and replica pistols to flamenco dresses.

In the 1960s and 70s, these passageways were crammed with drinking bars and bustling with tourists and expat residents who partied until sunrise.

**Bohemian attitudes**

The legendary Dutch pianist Pia Beck owned the famous Blue Note Bar, which was situated in the Pasaje Begoña (now Pasaje Gil Vicente).

This popular basement club's centrepiece was a grand piano, on which Pia would entertain her clients. She also had a resident quartet made up of musicians she brought over from Holland; although the line-up would change constantly, for it is said that Pia rarely paid her musicians.

Other popular drinking haunts were El Refugio, Whisky a go-go, Bossanova, Au rendez-vous, Serafino and The Duke of Wellington. Most of these venues were frequented by the ever-increasing expatriate population of Torremolinos, many of whom shocked the locals with their bohemian attitudes, and the fact that they had no desire, or necessity, to work.

It was during this time that the permissive attitudes and lifestyles of Torremolinos began to make headlines. Spain was still under an extremely devout Catholic dictator-



Calle San Miguel has always been the holidaymakers' favourite high street. :: SUR



Calle San Miguel in the 1970s. :: SUR



In 1949, from Plaza Costa del Sol. :: SUR



Calle San Miguel before it became the commercial heart of Torremolinos. :: SUR



Nothing remains of the old street and even the mountain backdrop is no longer visible due to development. :: SUR

ship and the provincial and local authorities had come under increasing pressure to do something about the situation.

Torremolinos was branded a scandalous place where drugs and homosexuality were commonplace, a town where foreigners from around the world came in search of free love and debauchery.

In June 1971, the police tried to the end the intemperance, but although the clamp-down was harsh, it did little to stop the nightly carousing that took place in the maze of tiny passageways that lead from Calle San Miguel. The night clubs and bars are now distant memories and the bohemian revellers and expats have moved on, although some who remember the street during its heydays still reminisce with great affection.

Of course, Calle San Miguel did not just cater for the uproarious foreign element. There are several old Spanish establishments in the street, like El Toro and Quitap-

enas, which are still offering their wares to tourists and locals today.

One of the most famous during the 1960s through to the 80s, Quitapenas is a typical Andalusian tavern that was originally situated close to the tobacconist. Quitapenas - the name is derived from the fact that it took away the sorrows of the muleteers thanks to its popular Malaga wines - moved to its new home at the bottom of Calle San Miguel in the 1980s.

The tobacco shop is still in its original position, although the tiny whitewashed building that once housed it was destroyed during renovation work in the 1970s.

There was once a lumber yard on the op-

posite side, where the train line used to cross the street. A few metres along from where the old lumber yard was once located is Bodega Guerola, which clings to the corner of Calle de las Mercedes. This is another nostalgic old tavern, founded in 1962, that is still open today. The interior is delightfully decorated with wrought iron grills, rustic ornamentation and plenty of wood, much the same as it was in the 60s.

Calle San Miguel has continued to change over the years and any signs of the street's rowdy nightlife have long since been erased, although a few of the old restaurants and bars give a hint of what the street was once like. Today the street is lined with commercial outlets selling the same tacky souvenirs and flamenco dresses, yet it is still the most famous, and most visited, street on the Costa del Sol.

San Miguel will continue attracting tourists for many years to come, although the postcard image is the one we remember with fondness.

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**Townhouse El Coto ASC-133186 160,000€**  
Built: 69m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 10m<sup>2</sup> - 2 Bed - 2 Bath

Cozy townhouse for sale close to all amenities on the outskirts of Fuengirola. Walking distance to supermarket, pharmacy, and restaurant. Set in an enclosed urbanization with 2 pools, gardens and parking. Large south facing terrace with sun mostly all day, access to a small garden. Well presented, stays partly furnished.

**Apartment Carvajal ASC-133131 149,500€**  
Built: 49m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 102m<sup>2</sup> - 1 Bed - 1 Bath

Fantastic apartment with stunning sea views walking distance to the beach in Fuengirola, close to the promenade and the train station. Offers a double bedroom, large bathroom, fully fitted kitchen, and lounge dining with south facing terrace. Sold furnished and with private parking. Communal pools and gardens.



**Apartment Mijas Costa ASC-133083 175,000€**  
Built: 66m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 36m<sup>2</sup> - 2 Bed - 2 Bath

Fantastic ground floor apartment with a large terrace with sun all day and sea views. Set within the club la costa holiday resort on the outskirts of Fuengirola. Walking distance to the beach. Successfully rented throughout the year. Fully registered. Possible to take over the existing bookings giving you a return from day one.

**Apartment Torrequebrada ASC-124756 199,000€**  
Built: 85m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 30m<sup>2</sup> - 2 Bed - 2 Bath

South west facing apartment with large sunny terrace, part of which has been enclosed with glass curtains. Set in a beautiful urbanization with pool and gardens, playground for kids and a park. Parking and a storage included in the price. Close to golf! Excellent qualities.

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**Townhouse Torreblanca ASC-124707 360,000€**  
 Built: 237m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 110m<sup>2</sup> - 4 Bed - 3 Bath

Immaculate house for sale in Fuengirola, walking distance to the beach. Set in an gated urbanization with an indoor pool and communal sauna. Very spacious and bright property set on 3 floors, with terraces off each of the bedrooms. Large garage for 2 or 3 cars.

**Penthouse Fuengirola ASC-124457 430,000€**  
 Built: 99m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 90m<sup>2</sup> - 4 Bed - 2 Bath

Amazing penthouse with massive terrace and sea views second line beach and close to all amenities. Set in an urbanization with pool and garden, offering a huge terrace with sea and mountain views and all day sun. There is a parking and a storage included in the price. Ideal for holidays for a family!



**Penthouse Los Pacos ASC-124120 135,000€**  
 Built: 71m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 12m<sup>2</sup> - 2 Bed - 1 Bath

Beautiful penthouse for sale Fuengirola, offering great open views. Set in an enclosed resort with 2 pools, communal sauna and gardens. Offering 2 large bedrooms, kitchen which could easily be opened to the lounge. Open views and sun all day from the terrace. Private parking space. Ideal for holidays or permanent living.

**Penthouse Mijas Costa ASC-120046 299,000€**  
 Built: 111m<sup>2</sup> - Terrace: 25m<sup>2</sup> - 3 Bed - 2 Bath

Triplex apartment with stunning views. Main level offers ample kitchen, cloak room and big lounge with terrace. Lower level, a master bedroom with dressing room and ensuite bathroom, second bedroom, and guest bathroom. Top floor third bedroom and lovely solarium with fantastic views. Communal pool and gardens.

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## Françoise Rajewski

PRESIDENT, ACOMPALIA



“The worst thing about summer is that it doesn’t last all year!”

Françoise Rajewski has recently become Acompalia’s new president.

- 1 El Balneario del Carmen in Pedregalejo.
- 2 See above.
- 3 Staying in the shade and reading.
- 4 Drinking plenty and jumping in the water regularly.
- 5 Gazpacho.
- 6 My own homemade mojitos!
- 7 From my pool at home where we can see the mountains and different birds, including birds of prey.
- 8 Anything by Portuguese writer J. R. Dos Santos and Cuerpo Mente magazines.
- 9 The long days and nights with family and friends.
- 10 It doesn’t last all year long!

## THE QUESTIONS

We asked a group of local residents to share what they like best about summer on the Costa del

Sol. The next few pages reveal their responses when we asked for the following information:

1 A favourite place

2 A favourite place to chill out

## Selina MacKenzie

RADIO PRESENTER



“The best thing about summer is living here in Spain”

Selina spends the summer eating chocolate and sipping gin and tonics on the beach in San Pedro.

- 1 San Pedro de Alcántara.
- 2 At home.
- 3 See answer to question number 6.
- 4 Sit in the TRE Studios.
- 5 Anything with chocolate in. Actually, chocolate is good in any season.
- 6 Gin and tonic. Preferably whilst sitting on the beach.
- 7 The Mediterranean.
- 8 Once We Were Brothers, by Ronald H. Balson. It’s fantastic.
- 9 Living here in Spain.
- 10 Mosquitos and anywhere that does not have air conditioning.

## Nancy Ruth

SINGER SONGWRITER



“On hot nights I spray myself with cold water to keep cool”

The Canadian-born singer songwriter says she’s at her fittest in summer.

- 1 Rincón de la Victoria beach as it’s the beach I live on .
- 2 Plaza de Flores, Benagalbón .
- 3 I’m nearly allergic to the sun so I spend all day working in my studio.
- 4 I keep a spray bottle of water on my bedside table.
- 5 Gazpacho and grilled rosada .
- 6 Una clara (beer with a dash of lemonade).
- 7 The road up to Canillas de Aceituno .
- 8 I’m currently reading ‘A La Sombra de los Recuerdos’ by Manuel Ruíz Benítez .
- 9 I kayak and swim when I can so I’m at my fittest .
- 10 When it’s above 40 degrees .

**3 Things you like to do in the sun**

**4 Your best tip to keep cool**

**5 Your favourite summer dish**

**6 Your favourite summer drink**

**7 The best view**

**8 The best summer read**

**9 The best thing about summer**

**10 The worst thing about summer**

## Carlos White

FUNDRAISER FOR CUDECA



“The aqua park is the best way to keep myself cool”

Always conscious of the harmful rays of the hot summer sun, Carlos prefers the shade when the temperature gets too high.

- 1** I look for beaches without pebbles, so Cabopino normally comes out on top.
- 2** The aqua park is the best place to keep cool during the summer.
- 3** Very little, because of harmful rays.
- 4** Indoors with the air conditioning on.
- 5** Fresh salads.
- 6** Shandy and wine .
- 7** The views from Mijas down to Fuengirola.
- 8** SUR in English and newspapers with football transfer gossip.
- 9** Swimming and a lighter diet.
- 10** Intense heat and clogged up roads.

## Natalie Richardson

SOCIALITE AND FORMER MODEL



“My view of Puerto Banús is glorious”

Natalie Richardson is best known for her role in ‘Life on Marbs’, as well as being former girlfriend of Leonardo DiCaprio and Calum Best.

- 1** Nikki Beach .
- 2** El Ancla.
- 3** Drink cocktails.
- 4** Wear a big hat.
- 5** I don't eat meat but I love fish on the BBQ.
- 6** Sangría.
- 7** The view from my garden is pretty spectacular it overlooks the ocean and Puerto Banús harbour, at night time when it's all lit up it's glorious to sit outside and chill watching the world go by .
- 8** Society magazine (I have a column called Reality Bites).
- 9** Spending 12 weeks with my daughters.
- 10** Drunk tourists .

## Glenn Ward

FOUNDER OF 'THINGS2DO MARBELLA'



“There are so many healthy restaurants in Marbella now”

Described as an all-round action man, Glenn Ward enjoys the summer buzz in Marbella.

- 1** Playa Puerto Banús on the east side of Puerto Banús.
- 2** Definitely my house - we live on the Istán road next to the lake so it's so tranquil.
- 3** Hit the beach or the pool.
- 4** Make sure you enjoy the Mediterranean sea.
- 5** It has to be salads - there are so many healthy restaurants in Marbella now with so many exciting new salads.
- 6** Nice cold white wine.
- 7** The summit at the top of La Concha.
- 8** Not a big read.
- 9** The buzz and the people.
- 10** Traffic jams!

- 1 A favourite place
- 2 A favourite place to chill out
- 3 Things you like to do in the sun
- 4 Your best tip to keep cool
- 5 Your favourite summer dish

## Ana Scherman

COUNCILLOR AT BENALMÁDENA TOWN HALL



“I love the view from Calamorro at sunset, it is breathtaking”

Ana likes to spend the summer evenings eating fresh sardines and strolling along the promenade in Benalmádena.

- 1 Malapesquera Beach.
- 2 The pedestrian walk from Torrequebrada to Torrevigía.
- 3 A good swim along the coast.
- 4 Loose clothing and a Panama hat.
- 5 Fresh salads and cold soups.
- 6 A very cold shandy made with lager.
- 7 Calamorro Mountain at sunset, it's breath-taking.
- 8 La Forja de un Rebelde by Arturo Barea.
- 9 Long evenings.
- 10 Some say the crowds of people, but Benalmádena would not be the same without them. It makes you appreciate the tranquillity of spring and autumn.

## Sandro Morelli

OWNER OF VILLA TIBERIO RESTAURANT



“I love to water my plants and look after my gardens”

Sandro Morelli says there's nothing he doesn't like about the summer.

- 1 The one next to Puerto Banús - just down from the restaurant.
- 2 Villa Tiberio in the daytime - in the morning I water my plants, swim in the pool and have lunch in this beautiful setting.
- 3 Water my plants and look after my gardens.
- 4 Don't drink too much alcohol.
- 5 Seafood salad.
- 6 Agua- I don't drink alcohol; I've seen too many drunk people in my life.
- 7 My gardens, they're unbelievable... my stunning, beautiful gardens.
- 8 Hmm.. I don't really read.
- 9 My flowers, my beautiful flowers.
- 10 There is nothing “worst” about summer at all... I cannot think of one thing.

- 6 Your favourite summer drink
- 7 The best view
- 8 The best summer read
- 9 The best thing about summer
- 10 The worst thing about summer

## Chris Dove

AUTHOR



“I like to hang out on a terrace and watch the world go by”

Fuengirola based author, Chris Dove, claims she uses the summer as an excuse to entertain friends and family.

- 1 We call it Carina's Beach, but it's actually a lovely area in Elviria, Marbella.
- 2 On a high stool, glass of wine in hand, in one of Fuengirola's trendy plazas.
- 3 On a rooftop terrace watching the world go by.
- 4 Always sit in the shade.
- 5 Fresh swordfish, chips and salad.
- 6 Tinto de Verano.
- 7 Panoramic views from Fuengirola.
- 8 Trick of the Dark by Val McDermid.
- 9 An excuse to entertain my friends and family.
- 10 A noticeable slowdown in human activity.

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- 1 A favourite place
- 2 A favourite place to chill out
- 3 Things you like to do in the sun
- 4 Your best tip to keep cool
- 5 Your favourite summer dish

## Liz Luyben

OWNER, TABLE MOUNTAIN RESTAURANT



“To keep cool I start my days early and then have a siesta”

Liz Luyben is the owner of Table Mountain restaurant in Comares and says there's nothing better than a very cold beer.

- 1 I'm not much of a beach person but I like to sit and eat pizza on the beach!
- 2 Any terrace in Comares where you can sit and watch village life roll by.
- 3 Relax and have a beer!
- 4 I start my days early and have a siesta .
- 5 Ice-cold gazpacho .
- 6 A very cold beer .
- 7 The view from my own terrace of endless mountains and Comares .
- 8 I've recently downloaded Enid Blyton's Mallory Towers series .
- 9 The beautiful long nights and sitting outside with friends .
- 10 There's nowhere to park!

## Karen McMahon

TELEVISION PRESENTER



“I love the gorgeous views of the Mijas mountains at dusk”

Karen spends her days under the hot lights of a television studio, so she likes to unwind with a chilled watermelon and champagne cocktail after work.

- 1 Playa Bolonia; it is so relaxing.
- 2 The Tamisa Hotel in Mijas Costa.
- 3 People watching.
- 4 Wear lightweight, loose fitting, light coloured, cotton clothes.
- 5 Sopa de Ajo Blanco (cold garlic soup).
- 6 Watermelon and champagne cocktail.
- 7 The Sierra de Mijas at dusk. The views are gorgeous.
- 8 Anything by Sandi Toksvig..
- 9 You can eat out at midnight.
- 10 Pesky mosquitos.

- 6 Your favourite summer drink
- 7 The best view
- 8 The best summer read
- 9 The best thing about summer
- 10 The worst thing about summer

## Kara Jaye

PART OWNER OF THE BOARDWALK RESTAURANT, MARBELLA



“I look forward to the cold weather by August”

Summer means family time for this business owner.

- 1 Plaza Beach, the absolute best beach bar to party too.
- 2 El Faro beach - it's all rocky and not at all plush but I love that no one knows me and I can play with my children in peace.
- 3 Torremolinos water park with my two boys.
- 4 Stay at home with the air con on.
- 5 Paella.
- 6 Marrakech Martini.
- 7 The Boardwalk window seats at 7-8am when we have the dolphins pass by.
- 8 Anything by Kimberley Chambers; she's amazing!
- 9 The long days and happiness of the children on holiday; I absolutely love to watch the families spending quality time together.
- 10 The extreme heat - I look forward to winter weather by August.

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- 1 A favourite place
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## Ellie Hurst

BOUTIQUE OWNER, TORRE DEL MAR



“Stay out of the sun, move slowly and if possible not at all”

Ellie is the owner of Lukumar boutique in Torre del Mar and loves chilling out on Almayate beach.

- 1 Almayate.
- 2 In the shade.
- 3 Stand Up Padel.
- 4 Stay out of the sun and move slowly if you must or if possible not at all.
- 5 Salads with lots of fresh veg, dried or fresh fruit and nuts.
- 6 Dry white wine with sparkling water and lots of ice.
- 7 The sea.
- 8 A fast intriguing story...I can't think of one right now!
- 9 Beach barbecues and family visitors.
- 10 Parking my car and getting ripped off in overcrowded chiringuitos.

## Gloria Uribe

LEADER, LUX MUNDI TORRE DEL MAR



“I read and catch up on all the sleep I miss the rest of the year”

When Gloria Uribe isn't helping people at Lux Mundi she is on the beaches of Cadiz - as long as she can find somewhere to park the car!

- 1 All of the beaches in Cadiz, especially Valdevaqueros.
- 2 The beautiful modern chiringuitos, with lots of facilities.
- 3 Read and catch up on the sleep I miss the rest of the year!
- 4 I just wear my sunglasses!
- 5 Gazpacho and fritura de verano .
- 6 Blanco de verano.
- 7 The sea from the mountains.
- 8 Among others I have Game of Thrones - all six of them!
- 9 Everything - I'm a real summer fan!
- 10 Parking!

- 6 Your favourite summer drink
- 7 The best view
- 8 The best summer read
- 9 The best thing about summer
- 10 The worst thing about summer

## Lina Hodgkins

LINEKERS GROUP MARKETING DIRECTOR



“The long warm nights and beautiful sunny days are the best”

The marketing director of the Linekers Group bars and nightclubs, Lina Hodgkins, says she loves outdoor eating, preferably paella on the beach by the Mediterranean.

- 1 Nikki Beach.
- 2 Mistral Beach.
- 3 Beach days, outside eating and drinking.
- 4 Loose clothing and air-con.
- 5 Paella on the beach.
- 6 Rose blush with lots of ice.
- 7 Victors beach .
- 8 Anything - I read all the time but mostly a chic book.
- 9 Long warm nights and beautiful sunny days.
- 10 Traffic.

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- 1 A favourite place
- 2 A favourite place to chill out
- 3 Things you like to do in the sun
- 4 Your best tip to keep cool
- 5 Your favourite summer dish

## Simon Jordan

BUSINESSMAN AND FORMER OWNER OF CRYSTAL PALACE FOOTBALL CLUB



“I love watching the world go by on the beach”

Simon Jordan says he loves the vitality of Marbella in the summer - when he's not looking at his own reflection.

- 1 La Milla.
- 2 Serafina in Puente Romano .
- 3 Sit on the beach with my friends, watching the world go by - especially if that involves beautiful women going by!
- 4 Spend as much time as possible in the beautiful Mediterranean sea.
- 5 Gambas pil pil at Dalli's Pasty Factory in Puerto Banús .
- 6 Tinto de verano.
- 7 My reflection.
- 8 My autobiography: Be Careful What You Wish For.
- 9 The energy and vitality that it brings to Marbella.
- 10 The people that Easyjet bring to Marbella!

## Steve Hughes "One Wish Steve"

SINGER



“My terrace has stunning views that look across to Morocco”

When not performing, One Wish Steve likes to relax by the pool, while listening to music and enjoying a refreshing gin and tonic.

- 1 Royal Beach in Calahonda.
- 2 A Chiringuito on Royal Beach.
- 3 Relax and listen to music.
- 4 A plunge in the swimming pool.
- 5 Tuna Salad.
- 6 Gin & Tonic.
- 7 My terrace has stunning views that look across the Mediterranean to Morocco.
- 8 Anything by John Grisham.
- 9 The buzz and the sun. I love to see the Costa del Sol busy.
- 10 Drivers who haven't a clue where they are going or what they are doing.

- 6 Your favourite summer drink
- 7 The best view
- 8 The best summer read
- 9 The best thing about summer
- 10 The worst thing about summer

## Javier León

FOREIGNER'S OFFICER, FRIGILIANA



“The best thing about summer is Madrid with no traffic jams!”

Fruit and beer are the keys to a good summer for Javier León.

- 1 My favourite local beach is Playa del Cañuelo in Nerja and Bolonia in Cadiz.
- 2 Playa del Cañuelo, Nerja.
- 3 Writing, reading comics, having a siesta and making love!
- 4 Sunshade, plenty of water and fruit.
- 5 Salmorejo, fruit - especially melon - and ham.
- 6 Session IPA - it's the perfect beer for summer.
- 7 From Frigiliana fort looking towards the Almijara mountains and the sea.
- 8 Comics!
- 9 Madrid with no traffic jams.
- 10 When it ends and it starts getting cold again.



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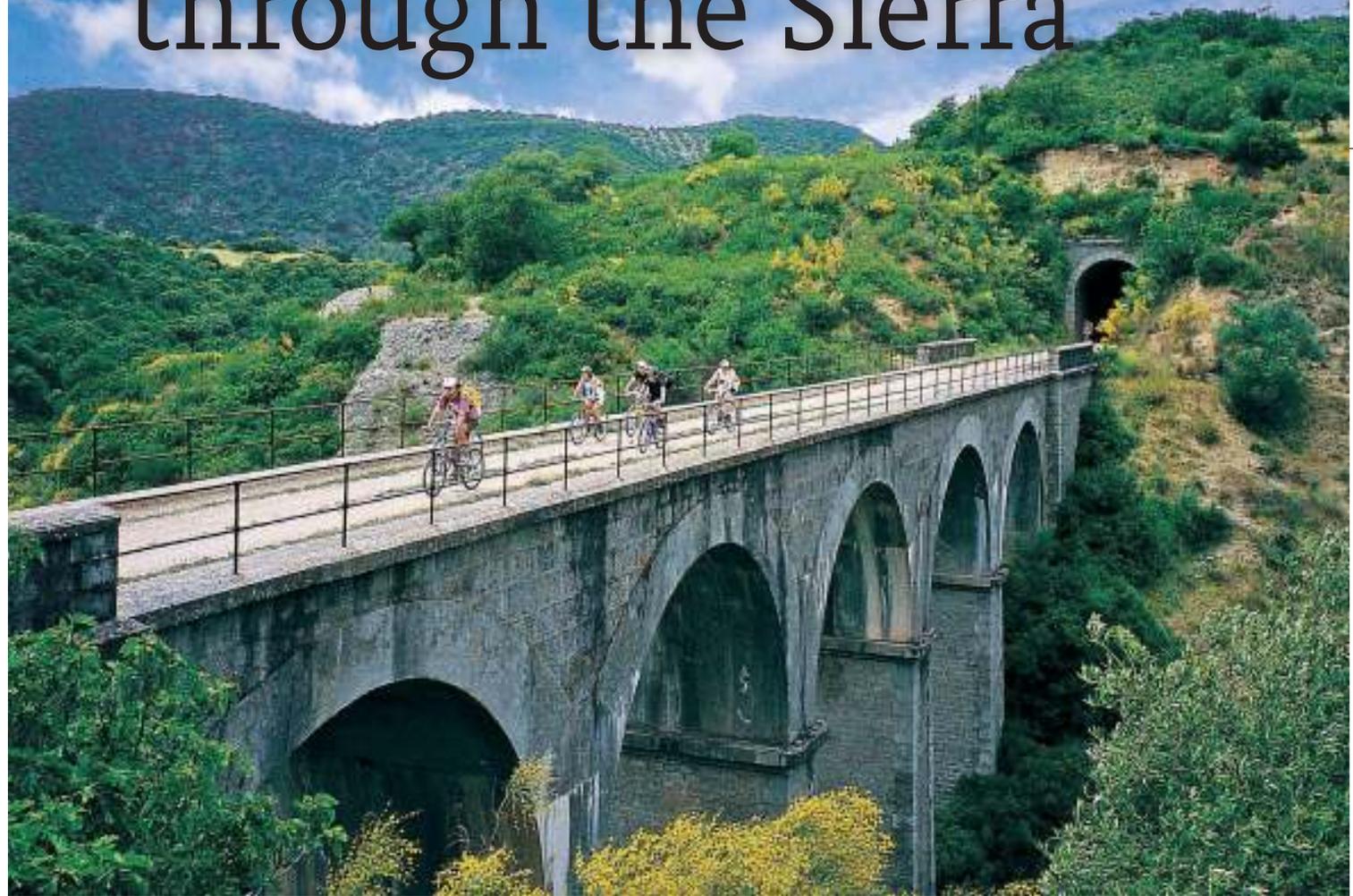


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# A relaxed cycling tour through the Sierra



The viaduct at the Peñón de Zaframagón, home to one of the largest Griffon vulture populations in Europe. :: ©FFE-VÍAS VERDES

## Old railroads have been turned into green belts all over Spain. There is a very good one not very far from Malaga

Discover the nature of Southern Spain in a different way on the Vía Verde de la Sierra in Olvera (Cadiz)

**UWE SCHEELE**

Spain has more than 7,600 kilometres of disused railway tracks. In a wide ranging programme, dating from 1993, more than 2,500 kilometres have been turned into 'vías verdes' (green paths), which you can now enjoy on foot or by bicycle. The tracks, which have very few steep hills, take walkers and cyclists across viaducts,

through numerous, usually illuminated, tunnels and past old railway stations (mostly used as restaurants or hostels) and small villages. The trails are wide, asphalted or covered with compacted gravel, and are therefore suitable for everyone.

One of the most scenic routes is the Vía Verde de la Sierra, right on the border between the provinces of Malaga and Cadiz. It covers over 36 kilometres from Olvera to Puerto Serrano. It is advisable to start the tour in Olvera, which is 450 metres above sea level whilst Puerto Serrano is only 155 metres above sea level. Sporty, ambitious visitors might climb the 300

metres from Puerto Serrano to Olvera or even make the round-trip within the day. However, the most comfortable options are either to stay overnight in one of the numerous hotels and simple hostels along the 36 kilometre route - or to take a taxi with transport trailers for bicycles for the return journey.

The route from Olvera to Puerto Serrano is easy to cover in one day; the journey will take about three and a half to four hours with numerous stops and detours. If you do not bring your own bike, you can hire one in Olvera or halfway in Coripe, where you can choose from a wide selection: there are mountain bikes, tandems, e-bikes, three-wheelers and bikes for four riders - you name it - but don't forget to make a reservation. This pre-order entitles you to call for assistance in the event of a breakdown and even to receive another bike.

The Vía Verde starts at the old Estación de Olvera, where you can park

**Take note**

**Olvera.** The picturesque white village of Olvera is worth an overnight stay. In the upper part of the village, the Barrio de la Villa, one can more clearly feel the Moorish character of the original settlement. A museum in the Casa de la Cilla illustrates the border situation between Al-Andalus and the Christian regions.

**UWE SCHEELE**

the car and rent bikes. The first four kilometres are asphalted so the village is quickly left behind. Soon the route passes through magnificent landscapes with stunning views. It leads through 30 tunnels and over four viaducts. Wheat fields stretch over gentle hills and the mountains of the Sierra de Cadiz rise in the background. The route is lined with broom and in the fields you can spot olive trees and holm and kermes oaks.

**Hardly any shade**

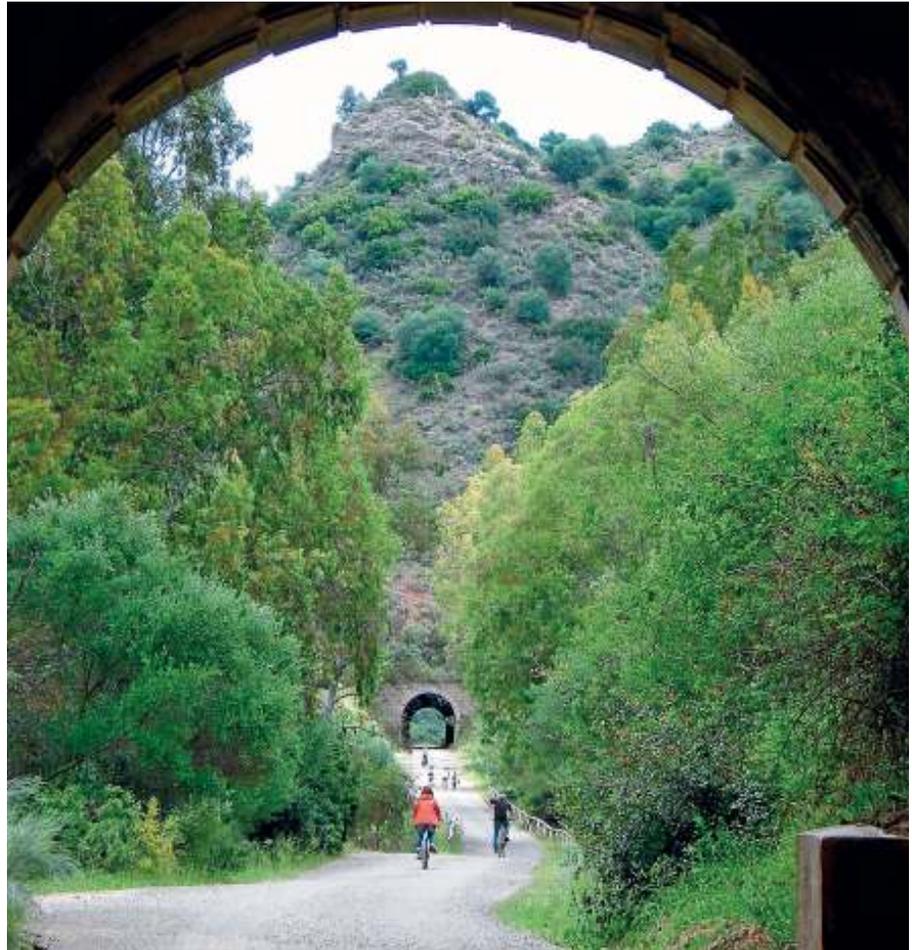
There are few wooded areas; the path mostly leads through open terrain and offers hardly any shade except once inside the tunnels - so a hat, sunscreen and plenty of water are indispensable. However, there are some small bars along the route where you can always rest in the shade and recover. In the summer, it can sometimes be quite dusty due to the fine gravel on the slope, and the temperatures often rise to above 35 degrees.

The old train station of Navalagrulla is charming but derelict and not somewhere to stay for very long. At the Estación de Zaframagón, however, the situation is quite different. The old station was turned into a Cantina (guest house) and an observation station for griffon vultures is located just behind the viaduct at the Peñón de Zaframagón area.

One of the largest populations of griffon vultures in Europe, 200 pairs, nests on the rocks of the Peñón. But they are very difficult to observe from the viaduct, even with binoculars, so you should definitely visit the Vulture Observatory of Zaframagón. There you find a remote controlled camera mounted on the rock which observes the birds when nesting and raising their brood and projects the pictures on a large screen.

**Imposing vulture rock**

The fauna of this giant rock is by no means confined to griffon vultures. There are also snake eagles, peregrine falcons, grey herons, bee-eaters, kingfishers, kestrels and owls. From autumn onwards you can watch the griffon vultures nest-building. From



Only some of the tunnels have light but all of them provide shade. :: V. VERDES

the beginning of February, each pair hatches an egg and after about 57 days, the young will appear. In July, the young birds hatch and live the first four to five years in young bird colonies until their sexual maturity.

From Zaframagón, a small river runs parallel to the track until the end of the route. The old railway station of Coripe has a restaurant with a large terrace. There is also a car park and bike rental, as Estación de Coripe is another starting point of the Vía Verde. A few kilometres further along you should take a small detour to the Chaparro de la Vega. This holm oak is over two hundred years old and is one of the largest of its kind, with a height of 13 metres and a diameter of 30 metres. In 2001 it was declared a natural monument by the Andalusian government.

In the shadow of the imposing tree, which is all the more striking in the midst of a sparsely vegetated landscape, there are always sporting and festive activities taking place. Coripe and the holm oak are located in the province of Seville, but shortly afterwards the route leads back to the province of Cadiz.

Along the route of the Vía Verde, picnic areas with wooden benches and tables invite you to rest. There you can enjoy nature away from the disturbing noise of civilisation. Although around 80,000 visitors were counted last year, the route is usually not very busy, so you do not need to look long for a free bench.

Shortly before reaching the finish line, you will notice that the comfortable gradient from Olvera to Puerto Serrano does not mean that you com-



Olvera has grown around the Moorish Castle which offers fantastic panoramic views. :: u.s.



Wildlife along the route. :: u.s.



Most of the hills are easy to climb. :: u.s.

pletely escape the need for pedalling; a ten per cent slope at this point forces most people to push their bike up the hill for the last few metres, until the worst is over.

After 36 kilometres in the saddle you can relax in the guest house of the Estación de Puerto Serrano or on the wooden benches outside. If you want to return by taxi to Olvera, it's advisable to call right away as the taxi takes almost an hour to get there.

### Sightseeing

Once back in Olvera, it's worth saving some time to take a nice stroll through the whitewashed village. The houses were built around a 12th century Moorish fortress which is majestically towering over the centre of the village. The castle was part of the defence system of the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada, and after the Christian conquest of 1327, it was given a Castilian superstructure which is still well preserved. It is really worth a visit since, from its towers, there is an impressive panoramic view of Olvera and the sur-

rounding countryside. On the square in front of the fortress rises the imposing Neoclassical church of Nues-

tra Señora de la Encarnación with its two bell towers. It was built in 1843 and is open to the public.

## OLVERA-PUERTO SERRANO CYCLE ROUTE

► **Information.** [www.fundacionviaverdedelasierra.es](http://www.fundacionviaverdedelasierra.es) and [www.viasverdes.com](http://www.viasverdes.com). Both websites offer further links and are multilingual. Maps to download.

► **Bike rental.** Sesca 09, Olvera: Touring bikes, children's bikes, tandems, trailers and seats. Price per day Touring bike: 12 € (pre-booking recommended). [www.sesca.es](http://www.sesca.es). Tel. 687 676 462, 657 987 432, [info@sesca.es](mailto:info@sesca.es).

Coripe: Irippobike. Tel. 679 613 069, [irrippobike13@gmail.com](mailto:irrippobike13@gmail.com).

► **Accommodation in the old station.** Estación de Olvera, [www.sesca.es](http://www.sesca.es) Estación de Coripe, [\[coripe.com\]\(http://coripe.com\)](http://www.laestacionde-</a></p>
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Estación de Puerto Serrano, [www.estionviaverdedelasierraps.es](http://www.estionviaverdedelasierraps.es) In all places there are simple hotels and apartments.

► **Vulture rock.** Observatorio ornitológico Peñón de Zaframagón, Entrance 2€. Opening hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-4pm, Sat 10 am-4pm. Closed on Sundays.

► **Transport.** Taxi Olvera, Tel. 669 848 -111, -148 (with bike trailer, up to 7 people, total price Puerto Serrano-Olvera 50 €); Andicar (Taxi Coripe) Tel. 691 448 722.; Andicar (Taxi Coripe) Tel. 691 448 722.



One disadvantage is that the cycling paths offer little shade, so water and sunscreen are essential. :: u.s.

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# Action and adventure on the Costa Tropical

**Follow in the footsteps of Laurie Lee and discover the charms of Almuñécar and neighbouring La Herradura**

While Granada's coastline stretches from La Rábita to Cerro Gordo on the border with Malaga, it's the two westernmost towns that are most popular among tourists

**JENNIE RHODES**

What was it about Almuñécar that kept making British writer, Laurie Lee, return, despite being evacuated from the town by a British destroyer and taken to Gibraltar at the start of the Spanish Civil War in 1936?

Possibly its unassuming charm, its relatively unadulterated beaches and

cool, compact town centre.

Lee first wrote about Almuñécar in his book, *As I Walked Out One Midsummer's Morning*, written in 1969, which recounts his journey on foot through Spain in 1935 and 1936, shortly before war broke out. He ended the epic trip in the coastal town, which he named 'Castillo' in the book, in order to protect the identities of the characters he wrote about. Lee returned to the town he had grown fond of in 1951 and paid later visits before his death in 1997. A commemorative plaque was erected in 1988, near to the hotel he stayed in on his second visit, on the town's coastal road.

The 'castillo', or castle he refers to

is the Castillo de San Miguel, which is located to the west of Almuñécar, near to the Majuelo botanical gardens and park and the parrot park - 'Parque Loro Sexi'. The Majuelo park is open throughout summer and not only is it the venue for numerous concerts and festivals through the season, its botanical gardens offer a cool respite from the heat.

Also nearby is the Parque Loro Sexi - another place with plenty of tree shade and the opportunity to meet the park's parrots and other species of animal.

Further along the beach heading east is Aqua Tropic - a saltwater water park, full of slides and pools which is open every day throughout



La Herradura's famous horseshoe shape gives it its name. :: A. P.

summer and is the perfect way to cool down.

### Popular beaches

As for beaches, Almuñécar has plenty to choose from, each with beach bars (chiringuitos) and lifeguards on duty throughout the summer months (until 15 September), from Playa de Gabria, a small bay below the four-star Playa Cálida hotel with access to the beach via walkways, to San Cristóbal, Velilla, which is popular with foreign second home-owners in the town, and Playa Muerto at the westernmost point of the town. A tourist train operates around the town throughout the year.

Marina del Este divides Almuñécar from its smaller neighbour, La Herradura, and is home to a number of bars and restaurants, largely serving the diving schools and boat owners who frequent the area. Many diving and other water sports excursions depart from the marina.

### Historical tragedy

Punta de la Mona separates Marina del Este and Almuñécar from La Herradura. It is home to a lighthouse, which in the 18th century was used as a lookout tower. However, it is the story of the shipwreck from the Spanish Armada which really puts La Herradura in the history books.

In 1562 the Spanish Armada sheltered at La Herradura from a storm, on its way to Oran, a then Spanish-held city in northern Algeria. When it



Sunbathers on La Herradura beach. :: ALMUÑÉCAR TOWN HALL

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was thought that the storm had passed the ships attempted to set sail again. However, the wind had changed direction and tragically 25 of the 28 ships in the fleet collided with each other, hit rocks and sank around Punta de la Mona and Playa Berenguales.

The tragedy is referred to in Miguel de Cervantes' famous novel, *Don Quixote*, in which he mentions the death of the daughter of Don Alonso de Ma-raión, a Knight of Santiago. Outside the San José church in the town the immortal words of Cervantes are inscribed, and in 1990 a monument in memory of the disaster was placed on the seafront.

La Herradura's Paseo Marítimo, or promenade, is named after one of Spain's most famous classical guitarists; the late Andrés Segovia (1893-1987).

He spent much of his retirement in his summer house in La Herradura and his legacy is still very much alive today in the town, in the form of the annual Andrés Segovia International Classical Guitar Competition which takes place in winter.

### Horseshoe bay

La Herradura means 'the horseshoe' in English and it is clear to see why given the shape of its beautifully curved bay.

There are a number of modern chiringuitos along the beach as well as several watersports centres offering activities such as diving, snorkelling, paddle surf and kayaking.

As well as watersports, La Herradura offers stunning views from its lighthouse at Punta de la Mona as well as the Cerro Gordo viewpoint to the west, which it shares with neighbouring Maro in Malaga province.

Cerro Gordo was declared a nature reserve by the Junta de Andalucía in 1989 thanks to the diversity of its maritime ecosystem, which includes the endangered 'orange coral' and is the most popular dive site in the area. Schools located in Nerja, Maro, La Herradura and Almuñécar all visit the area. No wonder the area left such a mark on Laurie Lee!



Almuñécar, with pebbly beaches, is a popular resort for families. :: IDEAL



Playa de Cabria. :: AYTO. ALMUÑÉCAR



Playa San Cristóbal. :: AYTO. ALMUÑÉCAR



The seafront of Almuñécar, lined with apartment blocks. :: AYTO. ALMUÑÉCAR



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2020

Take  
note

**Dolphin and whale watching.** There are several providers who organise tours in the Strait of Gibraltar. Catamarans, which are propelled by water jets instead of diesel engines, are environmentally friendly and preserve marine life.

**MARLENE WÖRNER**

# Europe's southernmost town has much to offer

**The long sandy beaches are a great place to watch the fantastic sunsets and are as romantic as the town itself**

Tarifa is very popular with watersports enthusiasts and sunbathers. A walk through the historic old town is also worthwhile

**MARLENE WÖRNER**

Tarifa, in the province of Cadiz, is the southernmost town of the European continent. It is located at the narrowest point of the Strait of Gibraltar, at the southern tip of the Costa de la Luz. Europe and Africa do not come so close together anywhere else. Morocco is only 14 kilometres away and can be reached by ferry several times a day from Tarifa. To this day, Tarifa is one of the most important links between Europe and Africa. On clear days, the Mirador El Estrecho, a car park with a kiosk located on the N-340 between Algeciras and Tarifa, offers spectacular views of the African coast and the Rif mountains.

## Historical background

According to archaeological finds in the area, we know that Tarifa was founded by the Phoenicians at the beginning of the first millennium BC. The city was settled by the Romans from the 1st century BC, and was then called Tingentera. In 710, it was conquered under the leadership of the Berber Tarifa Ibn Malik, to which its name is probably due. The castle was built by its Moorish rulers around 960. It is interesting to note that the word 'tariff' was derived



Heavenly sunsets. :: M. W.

from Tarifa, as the town on the waterway raised tariffs from the passing ships. It was not until 1292 that Tarifa was taken from the Moors by the Catholic King Sancho IV of Castile and León; battles were fought over it until 1344.

## A surfer's paradise

Tarifa is an internationally known and popular mecca for wind and kite surfers, similar to Hawaii or the Canary Islands.

In the evenings, the suntanned watersports enthusiasts meet in the pubs and tapas bars, and later on they move on to the beach clubs. Diving is also a popular sport in Tarifa and the rocks of San Bartolo attract many climbers.

Tarifa is interesting not only for athletes, but also because of its location and surroundings. With its maze of narrow streets and romantic squares, the Moorish-influenced town is already an attraction in itself. Tarifa's old town was declared a protected cultural space in 2003, as large parts of the original structure and medieval walls are preserved. The town is dotted with historical sites. Coming from the N-340, head straight to the only entrance to the old town - the Puerta de Jerez. The Mudéjar-style gate is marked with the date of the reconquest of the city: 21 September, 1292.

The well-preserved castle Castillo de Guzmán, built by the Moors, has survived several battles. A visit is worthwhile if only for the views of the harbour, the sea and the old town. The castle also has a church, the Iglesia de Santa María which dates from the 14th century. The lighthouse of Tarifa and Santa Catalina Castle are located on the small island of Isla de las Palomas, which is accessible by road.

Breathtaking sunsets, extensive sandy beaches and dunes are the essence of the Spanish Atlantic coast. One of the several beaches in Tarifa, known as Playa Chica, stretches in front of the Isla de las Palomas, right along the western part of the old town. To the north, you can find the Playa de los Lances, and when you follow the N-340 westwards, you will

find the beautiful beaches of Torre de la Peña, Valdevaqueros and Bolonia.

### Dolphins and whales

The Strait of Gibraltar, where the waters of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic meet, has developed a unique eco-system. Up to seven different species of marine mammal can be found here which is why a trip on board of one of the whale watching companies' boats is highly recommended. You can observe dolphins, pilot whales, fin whales and sperm whales, and also tuna fish and turtles.

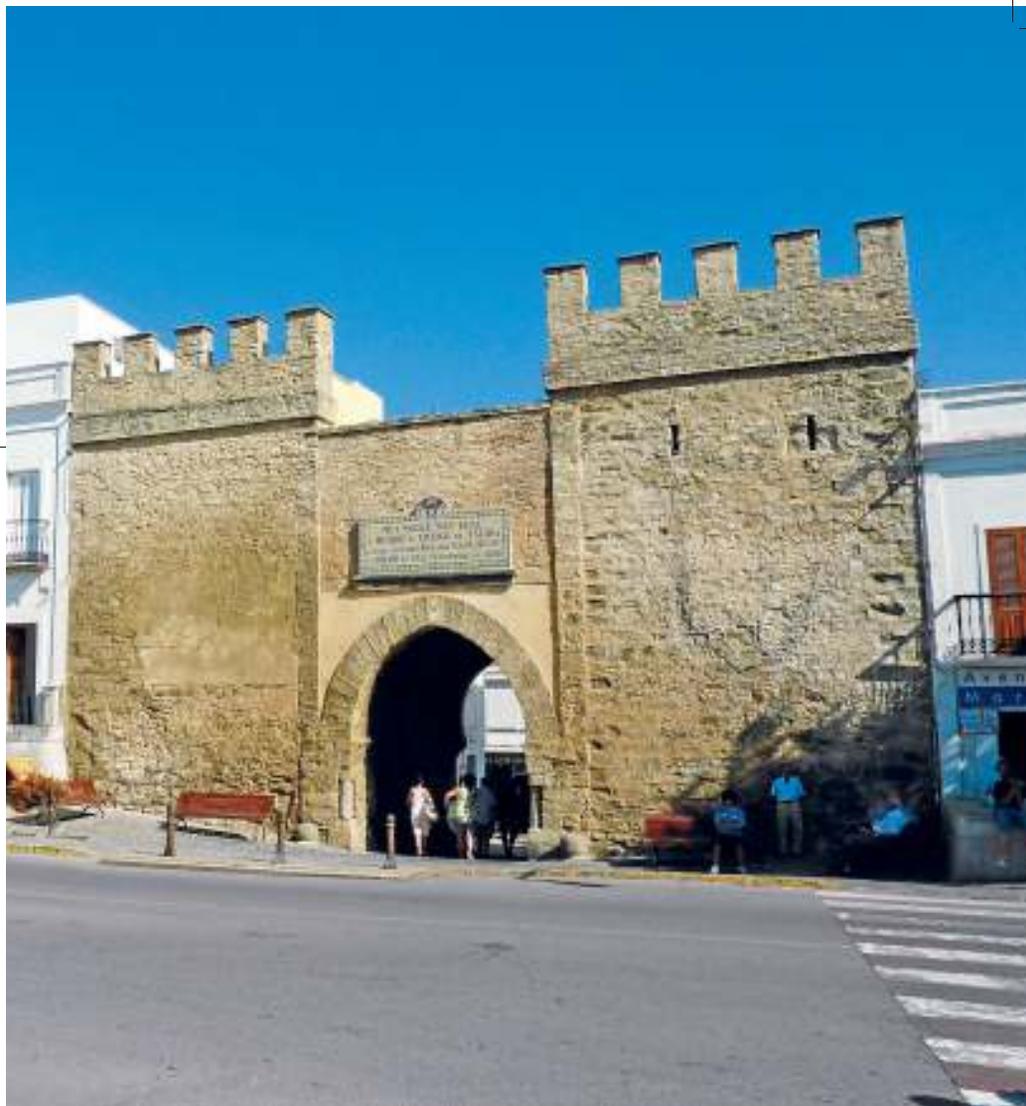
From July to the beginning of September you may even be lucky enough to come across killer whales, which enter the Strait of Gibraltar in search of tuna. The fascinating environment of the Strait of Gibraltar, where the Mediterranean and the Atlantic flow together and two continents meet, makes such a trip a special experience.

### Bolonia and Baelo Claudia

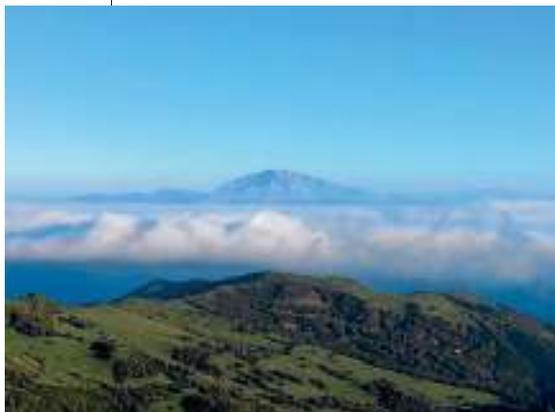
About 17 kilometres north-west of Tarifa lies the charming village of Bolonia, located in the bay of the same name. The bay of Bolonia has an almost four kilometre long, fairly broad and sandy beach and is also known for its 30-metre-high and 200-metre-wide sand dune, which is located at the farthest end of the beach. The outstanding scenery offers a great environment for walking along the beach.

Since 2001, the Bolonia dune has been a protected natural monument because of its ecological importance. Due to the strong wind of the Levant, however, the dune continues to migrate into the interior of the country, displacing the pine trees growing there.

On your way towards the dune and already on the outskirts of the village, you will come across on your right hand side the ruins of the Roman town of Baelo Claudia - one of the best-preserved Roman settlements in Spain. It has been excavated with the help of the European Union. Since 1917 excavations have been carried out here. The visitors' centre will give you detailed information about the finds from the site. The settlement was



The Moorish city gate, Puerta de Jerez, is one of Tarifa's emblems. :: M. WÖRNER



Africa, close enough to touch. :: M. WÖRNER

founded in the 2nd century BC and the Romans built up a large industry to process all the fish they caught, mostly tuna, and developed the famous garum sauce which recently has been recreated by some gourmet restaurants. The whole Roman Empire was supplied with fish products that came from Baelo Claudia.

In addition to the remains of the garum factory on the beach, you can also visit the well preserved Roman theatre, one of the original three aqueducts and the basilica, which houses a statue of Emperor Trajan. Don't miss the thermal baths with their sophisticated heating system and the temple of Isis.

Historians are of the opinion that the greater part of Baelo Claudia is still hiding under the surface of the large hill which rises from the back of the site.

After numerous earthquakes in the region at the end of the second century, the Romans left the city. It was taken by the Moors in 711 when they started to conquer the Iberian Peninsula.



Plaza la Paz in the old part of Tarifa. :: M. W.

# Isla Cristina, a gourmet diner's paradise

**This small town in Huelva province is worth visiting for its unique range of fish and seafood, among other attractions**

From traditional cuisine to the most contemporary creations, visitors will find everything the palate desires, complemented by a diverse range of leisure activities

**PATRICK STAMANN**

Isla Cristina is located west of Huelva on the Costa de la Luz. This privileged spot was only settled in the 18th century by Catalan fishermen who were attracted by the rich tuna and sardine deposits and the salt marshes.

Today, Isla Cristina is the most important fishing port in Andalucía and one of the most important in Spain, on the one hand because of its exten-

sive fishing fleet, on the other hand because of its large catches of fish and seafood. The town, which has about 22,000 inhabitants, welcomes all visitors with great hospitality.

The importance of fishing for this municipality is also reflected in local gastronomy. It is characterised by its extraordinary variety of fish and seafood, which include white prawns, king prawns, giant prawns, sardines, mackerel, sole, tuna or anchovies. The latter are the most famous product of the region and are marketed primarily as canned products.

With this rich and high quality offer, it is not surprising that the gastronomy is a top tourist attraction for Isla Cristina. For generations recipes have constantly been refined, and the innovative, creative cuisine has not been neglected.

In addition, more and more people recognise the advantages of Isla Cristina as a residential, holiday or excursion destination. The natural surroundings, wide beaches, the mild climate, friendly inhabitants and rich gastronomy meet the needs of even the most demanding customers.

## **Gastronomical variety**

You can satisfy your taste buds in more than 100 bars. Many of them offer dishes from traditional cuisine at affordable prices, but there are also expensive restaurants that pamper their guests with exceptional culinary and superior service. There are, for example, delicacies such as sea bass in orange sauce, red tuna with tomato sauce and vegetables, squid in champagne, salad with dried tuna and almonds, and tomato vinaigrette au gratin with almond aioli or pralinés of lobster eggs on the menu,



Isla Cristina also borrows the Costa del Sol tradition of grilling fish over an open fire on an 'espeto' cane. :: SUR



Isla Cristina proudly offers an endless range of fresh, premium quality fish and seafood. :: SUR

as well as king herrings, sea spiders, dogfish and skate. Often fish are served as terrines with tomatoes, onions, peppers and potatoes. Also popular are tapas or stews of cooked or grilled shrimps, fried fish such as anchovies, squid or monkfish, as well as any kind of pickled fish. A speciality borrowed from the Costa de Sol, sardines and other smaller fish prepared over the wood fire on a cane skewer, is also very popular.

Anyone who has a sweet tooth will love mouthwatering desserts such as the Catalonian Coca, which here is however refined with candied pumpkin (Cabello de Ángel), or fig mash, to mention just the most unusual.

### Attractions

Isla Cristina is, however, far more than just gastronomy. The flowery Paseo de las Flores or the emblematic Paseo de las Palmeras are always worth a walk, and there are several monuments to be seen, including two in honor of fishermen. In addition, the town has some interesting churches such as the Iglesia de la Virgen del Carmen, the patron saint of sailors.

The civil architecture also has some outstanding examples, such as the Casa Patio San Francisco with its



The fishing boats arrive every day with a fresh catch. :: SUR

typical 19th century patio in the historic centre, where today the carnival museum and tourist office are housed; the contemporary Casa de Diego Pérez Pascual, today's library, or the beautiful tiled Casa de Don Justo.

The area around the village con-

sists of protected marshland, where about 140 species of migratory birds, including flamingos or terns, overwinter. On the ten or twelve-kilometre-long beaches with light, fine-grained sand, a variety of watersports can be practised so that the stay in Isla Cristina will never bore you.



The Rock of Gibraltar is impressive in very many ways. :: JOSELE-LANZA

# Gibraltar rocks in summer

**Music lovers should head for the Rock for some of the hottest gigs around, but there's plenty on offer for tourists too**

From Barbary macaques to prehistoric Gorham's Cave, a Harley Davidson rally and family festivals, this is the place to be

**DEBBIE BARTLETT**

It may be small but Gibraltar is packed with interesting places to visit and things to do, and its climate in the summer is lovely, often cooled by sea breezes while southern Spain is sweltering in

the heat. It is definitely an inviting place to be outdoors by day or at night, and its unique location between Spain and Africa means there are impressive views, no matter which way you look.

Music plays an important role in Gibraltar's entertainment programme all through the year, and the variety of concerts and events means there is something to please all tastes. The Summer Nights festival, for example, is planned as something the whole family can enjoy together; the activities will take

place between 13 July and 12 August in venues such as Chatham Counterguard, Governor's Parade, John Mackintosh Square, Casemates Square and Ocean Village. Visitors and residents can look forward to evenings filled with music, dance, singing and loads of fun for the younger family members, including bouncy castles and face painting, between 8 and 11.30pm.

For those keen on international DJ sessions, the Dazed & Confused music festival will be taking place in the Outdoor Area of the Victoria Stadium from 2 till 11pm on 15 July. Tickets cost from £20 to £25 and further information can be found on the Facebook page [dazedandconfusedmusic](#).

Modern music lovers should also put 29 July in their diary, as that is the day the Festival of Colours takes place at the Europa Point Cricket Pitch, from 2pm onwards. This year's event will include a new Underground Stage as well as the Main Stage. Some 2,600 people attended last year, and the organisers are promising that this year will be even bigger and better. Those attending must be aged 16 or over.

August kicks off with the Gibraltar Electronic Music Festival at the Muga Sports Complex/Victoria Stadium on 5th, but those who are excited by powerful motorbikes should also note that the Harley Davidson Rally will be taking place on the same day. The bikes will gather in Casemates Square between 10am and 1.30pm, and after an address by chief minister Fabian Picardo they will take off on the Gibraltar Rock Ride at 2pm. At 2.40pm, a concert is due to take place at Lathbury Barracks retrenchment block.

All the fun of the annual Gibraltar Fair can be enjoyed between 19 and 27 August, with fairground attractions, food stalls and live music between 8.30pm and midnight.

In Gibraltar the summer continues well into September, and nobody will want to miss the biggest live music event of all on 2nd and 3rd: the Gibraltar Music Festival, which is now called MTV presents Gibraltar Calling. Some major artists will be performing and people travel from considerable distances to see their favourites in concert. For further information about the line-up and ticket



The Gibraltar Music Festival will be called 'MTV Presents Gibraltar Calling' this year. :: SUR

prices, visit [www.gibraltarcalling.com](http://www.gibraltarcalling.com)

Of course, some people prefer to spend their time in Gibraltar visiting the places of interest and there are certainly plenty of those.

### Tunnels and caves

Nobody should leave without seeing the famous Barbary macaques, the Great Siege tunnels, St Michael's cave, Europa Point, the Moorish castle, the Trafalgar cemetery, the King's Chapel, to name just a few.

It is easy to take a reasonably-priced taxi tour of the main sites, and there are also boat trips to see the Gorham's Cave complex, which became a World Heritage Site last year, from the sea.

Gibraltar's beaches are small and tend to be crowded in the summer, but there are public and hotel swimming pools which are ideal for cooling off, especially after a few hours enjoying something else at which Gibraltar excels: shopping. Main Street is definitely a place to shop until you drop, but don't worry - when you do, there are some very good bars and restaurants in which to recover.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

► To find out more about what's on in Gibraltar this summer, visit: [www.visitgibraltar.gi](http://www.visitgibraltar.gi)



Main Street.  
:: JOSELE-LANZA



Injuries often occur when one bull gets separated from the main group. :: EFE

# Spain's most famous summer fiestas

**This country is home to some of the most iconic festivals in the world. The summer sees the return of the running of the bulls, La Tomatina and the descent of River Sella**

While Andalucía has more than its fair share of traditional festivals the rest of Spain has some key dates on its summer agenda

**RACHAEL BREAKS**

Each year hundreds of thousands of people flock to Pamplona for the fiestas of San Fermín, also known as the running of the bulls, which has become one of the world's most unique festivals. Historically the festival began as a commemoration of Navarra's patron saint, however, over the decades its religious origins have taken a secondary role as it has become more famed for its perilous bull runs. These take place at 8am each morning of the week-long celebration, when members of the public run alongside six bulls as they are led through the streets of the old quarter to the bullring, in preparation for the bullfights in the afternoons.

The bull runs, or the 'encierros' begin at the City Hall square, after the thousands of thrill-seeking participants have chanted, in unison, "Viva San Fermín! Gora San Fermín!" and the 'chupinazo' rocket has been launched as the clock of San Cernin church strikes eight. The bulls then charge behind the runners for a treacherous 825 metres, the distance to the bullring, with the assistance of 'pastores' who are there to help prevent the bulls being separated. The run usually lasts between three and four minutes, however if a bull does become separated from the rest it can take up to 10 minutes.

It is estimated that more than a million people head to Pamplona during this week to soak up its electric atmosphere, as the festivities continue throughout each day and way into the night, in the form of exuberant street parties. However, those wanting to participate in the morning bull runs should not undertake this highly risky enterprise lightly. Runners should have a good level of physical fitness, a cool nerve, and quick reflexes, as recent years have seen numerous runners



Crowds turn out to watch the participants in the descent of the River Sella in Asturias. :: SUR

gored and severely injured.

This year's San Fermín festivities began in Pamplona on 6 July.

### La Tomatina

The world's biggest food fight, La Tomatina, which sees over 100 tonnes of tomatoes thrown on the streets in the town of Buñol, in Valencia province, takes place on the last Wednesday of August every year.

On the day of the festival, up to 20,000 people gather in Plaza del Pueblo in the town centre at 11am in anticipation of the unloading of the bounty of over-ripe tomatoes from various trucks. A quirky tradition dictates that no tomato should be thrown until a volunteer has succeeded in climbing to the top of a two-story high greasy wooden pole to reach a piece of ham. However, usually no participant is able to conquer the pole and instead the firing of water canons will eventually signal the start of one hour of tomato-throwing chaos.

This one-of-a-kind festival was unwittingly founded by a young man at a parade held on the last Wednesday of August in 1945. After being thrown off a float, the man, in his indignation, threw the object nearest to him - a tomato from a vegetable stand - into the crowd, which initiated a mass tomato fight between other attendees. The bedlam was enjoyed so much that the same man, and his friends, returned for another fight on the

same day the following year, this time armed with their own tomatoes, and the annual La Tomatina festival was born.

### Descent of Río Sella

Asturias is home to the International Descent of the River Sella, a 20-kilometre-long race which sees a fleet of 1,000 canoes row down the choppy river as fast as they can.

Participants begin their descent from the starting line in the town of Arriondas, which is nestled in the foothills of the Picos de Europa National Park, and finish in the coastal resort of Ribadesella.

This world-famous race, which first took place in 1929, is the focal point of a jam-packed four-day festival which takes place along the river's basin and consists of a vast range of activities, making it ideal for families and people of all ages. Other popular events include a gastronomic fair in Ribadesella's Campos de Ova, and Aquasella, an electronic music concert which has helped to create a lively party atmosphere around the festival

since it began in 2005.



The famous Tomatina tomato fight. :: SUR

## Take note



**Be Malaguista.** If you're here for the long term, why not support your local team and invest in a season ticket? Malaga CF have launched the 'Be Malaguista' promo, available for just 275 euros. **DARYL FINCH**

# The summer, an unwelcome break for some

## Since Michel's appointment as head coach, Malaga CF have turned a corner

After a fantastic final third of the season that saw the Blue and Whites finish eleventh, preparations are already under way for the new campaign which fans can't wait to start

**DARYL FINCH**

Malaga fans are certainly among a select few who didn't want the summer to arrive. The season began with optimism after Juande Ramos was appointed coach for the second time, but that soon disappeared as the club quickly became embroiled in a relegation battle by the time winter came around.

Things didn't improve in the new year, despite a change in the hotseat, with long-time number two Marcelo Romero leading the side to just one win from his ten games in charge.

By March it was the turn of former Real Madrid midfielder Michel and though the change wasn't immediate, Malaga started to climb the table. By the start of April, the Blue and Whites had gone on a run of six wins out of seven and the fans started to believe that their early season optimism wasn't misplaced after all. A 2-0 win at home to Barcelona, as well as a 4-2 victory over Andalusian rivals Sevilla,

showed that the personnel had been there all along and that they just needed a system that suited and some consistency in team selection.

For the first time in several years, Malaga didn't have to sell any of their prized assets last summer. Having finished eighth, they sought to consolidate their position and inject some youth into the squad with the purchase of wingers Keko and Jony, who both arrived with great pedigree from Eibar and Sporting, respectively. They also added another young talent in the form of Diego Llorente from Real Madrid on a season-long loan deal and Sandro Ramirez on a free transfer from Barcelona.

The latter would prove to be a steal, finishing the season as the club's top goalscorer with 14 goals, while the former would overcome a shaky start to become a

mainstay at the core of the team.

Unfortunately, however, Malaga will have to search for replacements for the pair as Real Sociedad look set to seal a permanent deal for Llorente, and Sandro's fine form, as well as an attractive six-million-euro release clause, has seen him attract the attention of Premier League side Everton.

Despite these perhaps unsurprising setbacks, the club is already acting fast to try to secure reinforcements for the coming season. With a manager with the pedigree of Michel, a three-time league winner with Olympiakos and a proven track record with 'smaller clubs' (he kept Getafe in the top flight against all odds), the club is confident of securing quality reinforcements and have already sealed deals for attacking midfielder Adrián from Eibar and defender Paul Baysse from Nice.

The focus this summer will be on quantity rather than quality with the club already having a strong core of players available to them, as well as several young players coming through the academy. In goal, they are confident of recruiting a reliable performer at the top level in the shape of Roberto, with whom Michel worked at Olympiakos, while in defence, January recruit Luis Hernández has already established himself as a leader.

He will need a partner or two still, but the club is well stocked in the full-back



La Rosaleda has a capacity of 30,000. :: SUR

### TOP SCORERS 2016/17

- ▶ **16 goals.** Sandro Ramírez.
- ▶ **Six goals.** Pablo Fornals.
- ▶ **Four goals.** Ignacio Camacho, Michael Santos.
- ▶ **Three goals.** Charles, Jony.



position with Roberto Rosales, Miguel Torres and Federico Ricca all reliable when called upon.

Barring any unexpected transfer activity, Michel will retain his preferred midfield trio. Ignacio Camacho has been the subject of interest for a number of seasons now, but no enquiries have ever become concrete, and his most likely suitors, Valencia, have recently dropped their interest due to financial constraints.

José Recio, for his part, has been a changed man since returning from injury. Now operating further up the pitch, he is influencing games and seems to have cut out a certain degree of the rashness which has characterised his career so far, where

he has picked up far too many cheap yellow cards.

Likewise, Pablo Fornals, 21, has come on leaps and bounds, starting the season as a bit-part player, playing out of position either on the right wing or as a second striker; now he is a key component in the middle three, chipping in with a very reasonable seven goals in all competitions. Interest from Arsenal has been mooted, but he is expected to sign a long-term deal with Malaga and put off talk of a move for at least another year.

Next season will be a key one for Keko and Jony who have thus far delivered in fleeting spells, but not managed to nail down a spot in the starting eleven. They

face serious competition from Javi Ontiveros who made his breakthrough in the final third of the season but is now sidelined for a number of months because of injury.

At just 19, he is the latest in a long line of players to make the step up from Malaga's famed academy to the first team. This season alone saw debuts for Youssef En Nesyri (20), Luis Muñoz (19) and Mikel (24), while several regulars in the first team players last year are still under the age of 25: Ricca is 22, Llorente and Juanpi 23, Sandro 21 etc.

This summer, twelve academy players will be hoping to follow in their footsteps after earning call ups to the first team for



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preseason. With a burgeoning reputation for nurturing young talent, it is little wonder that Malaga is a popular destination for some of Europe and South America's fledgling talents - even if it is just for a stepping stone on to a bigger club.

### A clear vision for the future

With a strong vision based on youth, and a manager with a plan to deliver it, Malaga will be hoping to press on next season, building on their mid-table finish, with Europa League qualification a lofty, yet attainable, ambition.

Preseason will be key in maintaining the momentum built on the final straight; to ensure as few distractions as possible, the club has rejected offers to travel to South Africa and instead will be in familiar territory, first with a training camp in Benahavis, then a second in the Netherlands from where they will travel to Duisburg to take part in the Schauinsland Reisen Cup once more. There they will face Aston Villa, Hertha Berlin and the local side.

The season may not start until late August, but there are several ways you can support your local team this summer. One such opportunity will be the confirmed friendly against English League One champions Sheffield United in Coín on 14 July. Another will be Costa del Sol trophy held at La Rosaleda, likely to be the final friendly before the season begins.

However, if you are here more long-term, why not join the 21,000 people who have already committed to season tickets for the upcoming campaign? Home support will be key and as a result the club has been looking at new ways to fill the stadium every fortnight. One such offer is the new 'Be Malaguista' season ticket which aims to unite foreign residents, historically a strong source of support, between 'Fondo Sur' and 'Preferencia'. Early subscribers for the ticket, which costs 275 euros, will also get a free scarf. Other incentives include freezing many normal season ticket prices for the second consecutive season and including Copa del Rey fixtures in the package.

The summer may be the most boring time for football fans, but it will certainly be worth keeping an eye on developments at La Rosaleda. It's an exciting time to be a Malaga fan.



The club relies a lot on the support of foreign residents. :: SUR



Winger Javi Ontiveros, 19. :: SUR



Michel has a proven track record. :: SUR



Malaga's young squad is one of the most exciting in the division. :: SUR

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# Soak away the summer heat Al Andalus style

**A visit to a hammam in summer is said to boost the immune system and circulation, helping the body to deal with the heat**

The Al Andalus Hammam in Malaga is one of four owned by the company in Spain and opened its doors in 2013 after a decade of careful study of Islamic architecture style and geothermal energy systems

JENNIE RHODES

When the body starts to feel the effects of the sun and sea water, an alternative idea is to visit the Hammam Al Andalus baths in Malaga's old city centre to rejuvenate and cleanse the body as well as spend half a day indoors and out of the sun!

#### Part of Malaga's Islamic heritage

Hammam Al Andalus opened its doors in Malaga in 2013 after ten years of laborious study into Islamic architecture in order to

build the baths as close to how the original hammams of the time of Islamic rule in Spain would have been. The Malaga baths make up one of four Al Andalus hammams in Spain, with others in Granada, Cordoba and Madrid. In Malaga the site is located in the city's old town, on Plaza de los Mártires, in a building that used to house an old kiln, next to the Mudejar Tower belonging to the Church of the Holy Martyrs.

It is designed to provide another reminder of Malaga's important Islamic past, along with the monuments such as the Alcazaba and Gibralfaro.

The idea behind the design of the hammam, or Turkish bath, is to capture the essence of the old Arab baths of Al Andalus; its cold, warm and hot water thermal baths form part of purification ritual and a series of steam, rest and massage rooms are decorated in Moorish style.

#### Pioneering technology

The Malaga hammam boasts a pioneering geothermal energy system, which sends the water 150 metres below the ground in order for it to "reach the perfect temperature" for each of its five spas.

The Turkish bath has five different spas and the experience starts with relaxation in a room known as the 'warm room', which is heated by hot, dry air. Bathers may then move to the 'hot room' before washing in cold water. After an optional massage, bathers finish in the 'cooling room' to relax.

In Malaga visitors can decide how long they wish to spend at each point on the circuit, which lasts for 1 hour and 30 minutes, including a massage which must be booked separately. The Hammam has three water rooms: a warm room at 36 degrees centigrade, a hot room at 40 degrees and a cold room at 18 degrees. There is also a steam room and rest room for post-ses-



Floating in cool water without the risk of sunburn at Malaga's hammam. :: SUR



One of the five spas at the Al Andalus hammam with different water temperatures. :: SUR

sion relaxing.

Different massages as well as hot stone beds are also available as extras, with sessions lasting anywhere between 15 minutes and two and a half hours, which includes the five spas and a one-hour massage session.

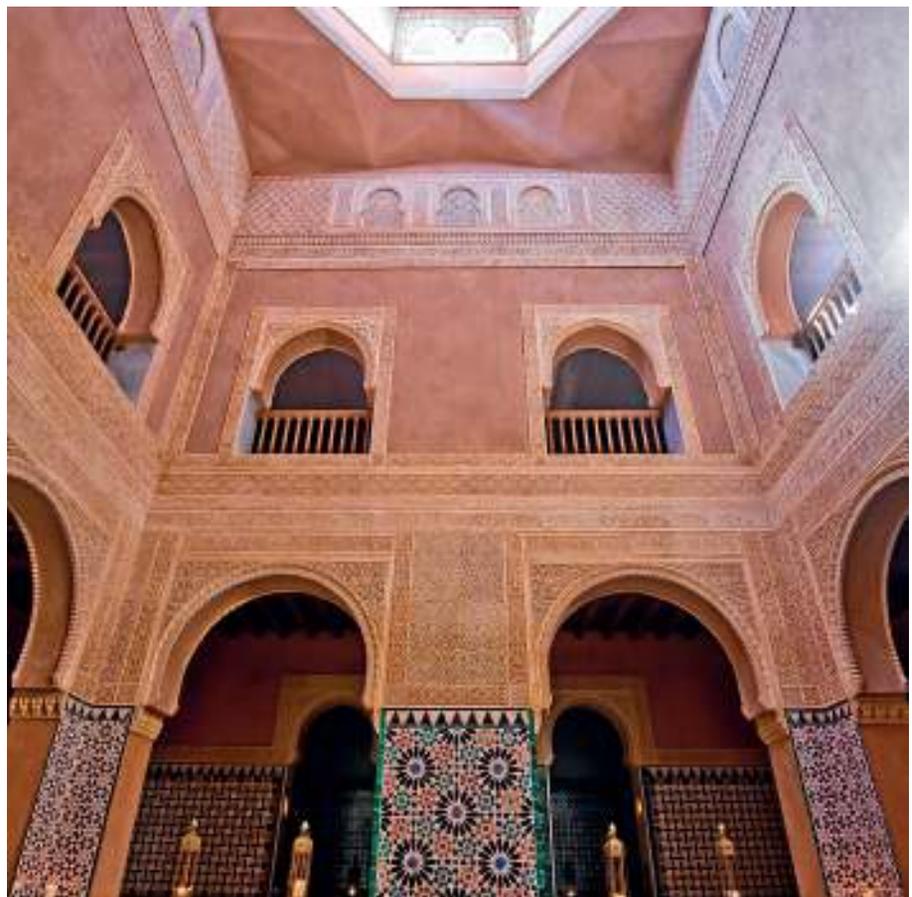
### Summer benefits

The hammam blog points out that there are enormous benefits to be had by visiting the baths in summer, including strengthening the immune system and boosting the circulation.

The hammam provides a towel, gel, shampoo, a hairdryer, moisturising cream and lockers for storing personal items. Visitors are advised to take swimwear. The circuit through the hammam is usually done barefoot. However, latex booties can be purchased at reception, which can also be used inside the hammam. Long hair must be tied up, but unlike public swimming pools in Spain, a swimming cap does not need to be worn.

The Al Andalus Hammam offers the perfect summer alternative to the bathing in the sea and another outing for the bikini or swimming costume!

For further information in English and online reservations visit:  
[www.hammamalandalus.com](http://www.hammamalandalus.com)



The building is the result of 10 years of studies into Islamic architecture. :: SUR

# Feria, the highest week of the summer

**The August fair is the week when the people of Malaga break their own rules and dance throughout the heat of the afternoon**

From the hot streets in the middle of the day to the cool fairground after dark, the August fairs follow similar patterns in Malaga city and smaller towns in the area

RACHEL HAYNES

For the people of Malaga the summer is divided into two halves: before the feria, and after the feria.

The former half is a brighter, fresher period, full of seasonal fun and anticipation. The latter half, however, feels heavier, hotter and lethargic.

It's hard to believe that just one week can have that effect on the mental state of an entire city and its surroundings, but it does. The festivities in the middle of

August mark the climax of the summer, which can be followed only by a reluctant countdown to the end to the holidays.

Malaga's Feria de Agosto can be rivalled only by its Semana Santa Easter celebrations in its ability to bring the city to a standstill for a week. During the days leading up to the fireworks that signal the start of the celebrations, the air of expectation is palpable. It might be hot but life doesn't feel sluggish as workers put the final touches to street illuminations in the city centre and bar owners string paper lanterns across their terraces.

Meanwhile, on the Cortijo de Torres fairground, a major transformation is taking place. For most of the year this looks like a dusty ghost town, with streets lined with what look to be half-built warehouses with old fashioned windows. As the middle of August approaches however, the buildings are given a lick of paint and fancy curtains. Bars are stocked up and industrial appliances moved into kitchens. Sound systems are installed and disco lights tested. This ghost town is about to come to life in a big way, with every single one of its buildings being turned into a bar, restaurant, concert hall, night club - or all four rolled into one - under the generic name, 'caseta'.

Meanwhile as delivery vans queue to offload barrels of beer and legs of ham and the huge gateway to this temporary party town is set up, on the other side of the main "high street", more preparation is under way. This time, though, trailers and caravans are being unfolded to reveal every kind of funfair ride and sideshow imaginable. If on one side of this huge fairground everything is ready for visitors to eat, drink and dance the night away, on the other side they can expect to be turned upside down, shaken and spun around until dawn.

The Feria de Agosto takes place every



Dressing up for elegant horseriding on the fairground in Malaga. :: P.H.



The 'casetas' on the fairground are decorated like typical Andalusian houses. :: FRANCIS SILVA

year in the week that includes August 15th and 19th, the first a national and the second a local holiday. The festivities kick off with a traditional opening speech, known as a 'pregón', given by a local celebrity, known as the 'pregonero', followed by a fireworks display on a Friday night. (This year it will be Friday 11th.)

### City centre heat

The following day sees the start of festivities in the city centre, when the Malagueños break one of their unspoken laws. Throughout the rest of the summer the locals will spend the hot hours in the middle of the day hiding away in the safety of the air conditioning or having a siesta under a sun umbrella. Only foreign tourists are mad enough to go out into the streets at that time of day, they might say. Well in fair week, all that changes.

With open air bars around the old town, not only are the locals in the streets at the hottest time of day, many of them are dressed in long, heavy-looking, flouncy gypsy dresses, a fan being the only concession to the heat.

The Malagueños' unusual behaviour continues, however; rather than keeping still in the shade, energetic impromptu



Biznaga sales are up in fair week. :: F. SILVA

dancing breaks out when you least expect, and, rather than avoiding dehydration with water, they drink strong, sweet wine out of small plastic cups.

And that is just the start: for the next eight days, the same scenes will repeat themselves in the city's streets. Back on

the fairground meanwhile, some relief from the heat of the afternoon is provided by awnings and misting systems, as horses are brought out in all their feria finery.

Then, as night falls and the elegant riders take their horses home, the fairground

## WHAT TO DO

really comes to life. Sound systems battle it out to see which can be heard furthest away and more strong sweet wine is poured.

The fairground has everything to enable whole families to party all night long if they want to. Children have their own 'caseta', as do senior citizens and young people, all with concerts and other entertainment.

And when revellers have had enough eating, drinking, singing, dancing and spinning, a fleet of buses is waiting to take them home.

Malaga's fair is by no means unusual, just big. The rest of the province's towns and villages all have their own versions of the feria that more or less follow the same routine. Some prefer the smaller fairs to avoid the crowds in Malaga city.

The same rules (or absence of them) apply: do what you spend the rest of the year advising people against. Go out in the midday sun in a long dress, dance all afternoon and night and drink wine. Repeat for as many days and nights as you can.

There's no wonder then that the summer fair is the turning point of the season. Before the feria the summer is young and exciting. After the feria the summer is old, tired and weak.

In the second half of August the streets are deserted in the afternoon, as the people go back into midday hibernation, and quieter after dark, as there is little money left to spend.



Crowds on the fairground after dark. :: F. SILVA



Entertainment at the daytime fair in the city centre. :: A. CABRERA

## SUMMER AND AUTUMN FAIRS IN MALAGA PROVINCE 2017

▶ Arroyo de la Miel: 24-29 June.

▶ La Cala del Moral: 1 - 3 July.

▶ Macharaviaya: 4 July.

▶ Estepona: 4-9 July.

▶ Maro: 7-9 July.

▶ La Carihuela: 14-16 July.

▶ Rincón de la Victoria: 14-17 July.

▶ Torre del Mar: 22-26 July.

▶ La Cala de Mijas: 24-28 July.

▶ Manilva: 26 July, Día de Santa Ana.

▶ Benagalbón: 5-7 August.

▶ San Roque: 9-13 August.

▶ Málaga: 12-19 August.

▶ Benahavís: 13-16 August.

▶ Antequera: 16-20 August.

▶ Sabinillas: 25 August.

▶ Ronda: 28 August - 3 September.

▶ Mijas Pueblo: 7-12 September.

▶ Torremolinos: 27 September - 1 October.

▶ Torrox: 5-8 October.

▶ Fuengirola: 6-12 October.

▶ Nerja: 8-12 October.

▶ San Pedro Alcántara: 17-22 October.



Dancing in the Plaza de la Constitución during the fair in Malaga city centre. :: SUR

**Take  
note**

**Festival feet.** Wellies are definitely not essential festival footwear in Malaga! Mine have been gathering dust since I left the UK in 2008. Despite the heat though, wear your old Converse rather than Havaianas to save your feet!

**JENNIE RHODES**

# Summer festivals not to be missed in 2017

**The province's 2017 music scene is as hot as the Terral wind**



The Prodigy headline the weekend Beach festival in Torre del Mar on 7 July. :: SUR

From pop to jazz, rock to opera and electronic to blues, there is something for everyone along the coast and inland from now until the end of September

**JENNIE RHODES / REGINA SOTORRÍO**

Summer music festivals are now as established on the Costa del Sol as they have been in northern Europe for many years. A quick search on the internet will throw up dozens of events, from five-dayers with camping included, like the Los Álamos in Torremolinos, or Weekend Beach in Torre del Mar, to one-day festivals, like El Chanquete in Nerja and Palmito Rock in Villanueva de la Concepción. Some require tickets, which are best booked in advance and are selling out fast and others, like Palmito Rock, are free.

## **A busy June**

Although June is but a fuzzy memory, it is worth noting the great start to the summer musical offer as it gives a flavour of things to come. The Beach Boys provided an auspicious start to the 2017 festival season at the Festival Ciudad de Fuengirola or Fuengirola Pop Weekend. The event also saw the likes of Hawaii Five and Paul Collins, in three different locations around the town.

The fort in Vélez-Málaga provided the perfect backdrop for Spanish band Los Secretos, who were supported by well-respected local group, The Electroduendes, signalling the official start of summer and providing a continuation of Noche de San Juan magic.

Malaga's Terral festival kicked off at the



Los Álamos summer music festival in Torremolinos. :: RAÚL BARCIA

end of June with flamenco guitarist Vicente Amigo. Continuing throughout the month and into early August, the lineup includes British instrumentalist, James Rhodes (7 August) and Scottish group, Capercaillie (9 July), who will be presenting their album *At the Heart of It All*.

The 58th Festival Internacional de Música y Danza brought opera, flamenco and ballet, courtesy of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba to the breathtaking natural stage of the

Nerja caves during June; a date which is firmly set in the calendars of residents and visitors to the town who come especially for this magical midsummer musical feast.

The Ojeando festival, in Ojén, which is celebrating its tenth year, ran from 30 June until 1 July and included bands such as Argentinian hard rock band Airbag.

**July**

From 5 to 8 July, the Weekend Beach fes-

tival is in Torre del Mar and tickets had already almost sold out in June for the hotly anticipated Friday night headline act, The Prodigy.

Twenty years on from their rave heyday, with tracks like *Firestarter* and *Voodoo People*, Keith and his band will be in Torre del Mar. Other bands to look out for during the five-day event include Brazilian thrash metal band, *Sepultura* and famous Spanish groups, *Chambao* and *Es-*




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Opera singers, Berna Perles and José Bros, perform inside the Nerja caves during the international festival. :: SUR

topa. Three stages, offering everything from dance, pop, reggae to thrash metal, are squeezed into the land behind Playa del Poniente to the west of the town and camping is available onsite.

Los Álamos Beach Festival on the promenade in Torremolinos gets under way on 13 and finishes on 16 July. Highlights include Martin Garrix, Sunnery James and Brian Cross. A detailed website provides all the information as well as tickets.

A move away from pop music and onto jazz, which is on offer in Almuñécar, on the Costa Tropical (Granada province). Throughout July a range of jazz styles have been carefully selected, including the Charles Lloyd Quartet, with Charles Lloyd (sax) Gerald Clayton (piano), Reuben Rogers (bass) and Eric Harland, (drums). All concerts take place in the Parque Majuelo and some are free.

If Almuñécar is too far, then Alhaurín de la Torre's jazz festival also takes place in July; Portón del Jazz runs from 7 to 28 and will star the Joey Alexander Trio on 7 July and Woman to Woman on 14, among other acts.

Up in Antequera as July draws to an end, the town's Blues Festival will be taking place on 28 and 29 July in Plaza Santa María and entrance is free.

### August and September

Throughout August the Festival Ciudad de Fuengirola continues, with Richard Clayderman performing on the 7th. Malaga's Terral festival draws to a close with James Rhodes on the same day.

The one-day Palmito Rock Festival in Villanueva de la Concepción is on 11 August and while the final line-up is still unconfirmed, A Solid Plan has announced that they will be playing, while in Villanueva del Trabuco the Indio Rock



The Beach Boys were in Fuengirola in June. :: SUR

festival is another freebie, taking place on 26 August, with Argentinian band, Airbag playing. The event starts at 10.30pm.

Almuñécar will be holding the Sexy Funk & Soul festival on 11 and 12 August in the Parque Majuelo, featuring artists such as Maldito Swing, Freak Da Funk and Funkdacion.

Frigiliana's Three Cultures festival

will take place from 24 to 27 August. However, the full details had not been released at the time of publication for this 12th edition of the hugely popular event.

Nerja's first foray into music festivals came last year and on the success of that, El Chanquete World Music Festival will be back for one day only, on Saturday 16 September on El Playazo beach.

### KEY FESTIVAL DATES TO COME

- ▶ **Weekend Beach:** 5 - 8 July, Torre del Mar.
- ▶ **Los Álamos:** 13 - 16 July, Torremolinos.
- ▶ **Jazz on the Costa:** Throughout July, Almuñécar.
- ▶ **Portón del Jazz:** 7 - 28 July, Alhaurín de la Torre.
- ▶ **Antequera Blues Festival:** 28 & 29

July, Antequera.

▶ **Palmito Rock:** 11 August, Villanueva de la Concepción.

▶ **Three Cultures:** 24 - 27 August, Frigiliana.

▶ **Chanquete:** 16 September, Nerja.

▶ **Terral:** Until 7 August, Malaga.

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# More than a music fest



The Nagüeles quarry site includes the main concert arena plus bars, restaurants and more. :: JOSELE-LANZA

## Every year an old quarry just outside Marbella plays host to the biggest names in music, from pop to opera

Old favourites Elton John, Art Garfunkel, The Bootleg Beatles and The Pretenders join contemporary pop stars such as Luis Fonsi and Manuel Carrasco at this year's Starlite Festival

**RACHEL ARMSTRONG**

The Starlite Festival in Marbella is back for its 6th edition this summer with a stellar line up, including a performance from the legendary Sir Elton John. Elton and his band will perform for

the first time at the quarry as part of his Wonderful Crazy Night international tour.

Other stars set to take to the stage this year include Andrea Bocelli, Anastacia and Jason Derulo to name a few, as well as Spanish favourites Malú and Manuel Carrasco. Kids also have something to look forward to with a Disney night featuring music from Frozen, The Beauty and the Beast and The Lion King.

Since the first edition of the festival in 2012, Starlite has grown significantly and continues to attract a wide range of nationalities. Enrique Sán-

chez, who works for the communication department, said more than forty different nationalities visit each year with the most prevalent being Spanish, Russian, German and Nordic.

Although most famous for its music concerts, the outdoor summer festival has a lot more to offer as a "complete cultural" experience, explains Enrique. "Starlite is more than a music fest; the people who come up will spend such a good time with the auditorium concerts, but we also offer a different experience in Starlite Sessions, with more artists and DJ's."

Guests will also be able to enjoy the worlds of cinema, art and fashion. Starlite boasts one of the biggest open-air cinema screen in Europe and it is an ideal spot for displaying exhibitions and new trends on the catwalk; young fashion talents have the opportunity to display their work on

## Take note



**Plan in advance.** Starlite is definitely worth a visit, whether or not your favourite 'star' is performing. Watch out though... Prices for the different tickets can vary enormously so make sure you book in advance to get the seats you want - and pay the price you want!

**RACHEL ARMSTRONG**

stage.

A fascinating gourmet experience is promised: the perfect place to dine under the stars. And there is always the opportunity to enjoy a gin and tonic, sit back and take in the unique atmosphere created in the exclusive quarry setting.

That is exactly what I did last year. Our first time up to the quarry, we were unsure whether to spend the money on a ticket to see The Corrs (the prices can vary quite a bit), but my friends and I decided to take a trip up to see what all the fuss was about anyway. Nineties kids, we chose that night to go in the hope that we might be able to hear faint notes of the Irish band and sing along to some of our favourite songs.

Approaching the venue it became clear they were audible all around the quarry, meaning we could wander round and explore the various stalls, before settling down in an al fresco bar, with a mojito in hand and the sounds of live Irish music permeating the air.

We might not have been able to see The 'Beautiful' Corrs, with only shadows of the audience visible through the back of the auditorium, but that didn't stop us belting out Runaway and reminiscing about our childhood; it's true that music can spark magical memories.

After The Corrs' performance, the entertainment moved out to the open-air stage right in front of the bar we were sitting in - all of sudden we had front row seats!

The setting, under the stars in the warm summer night air, made it that little bit extra special. And the experience as a whole is definitely one worth trying - with or without a ticket to the main event.



Antonio Banderas with girlfriend Nicole Kimpel at last year's charity gala. :: SUR



Elton John, at Starlite on 20 July. :: SUR



The Pretenders, on 26 July. :: EFE

## CONCERTS

- ▶ **Anastacia:** 15 July, 10.30pm. The white voice of soul presents her newest album A 4 APP.
- ▶ **Art Garfunkel:** 16 July, 10.30pm. The American artist has one of the most important voices of popular music.
- ▶ **Anna Netrebko and Yusif Eyvazov:** 19 July, 10.30pm. Soprano Anna Netrebko, is joined by tenor Yusif Eyvazov.
- ▶ **Elton John:** 20 July, 9pm. Sir Elton John joins Starlite as part of his international Wonderful Crazy Night tour.
- ▶ **Manuel Carrasco:** 21 July and 25 August, 10.30pm. Carrasco's *Bailar el Viento* was the best selling album of 2016 in Spain.
- ▶ **The Bootleg Beatles:** 25 July, 10.30pm. This British band has been recreating the Fab Four for over 30 years.
- ▶ **The Pretenders:** 26 July, 10.30pm. Chrissie Hynde and Martin Chambers will present their new album *Alone*.
- ▶ **Luis Fonsi:** 2 August, 10.30pm. His hit *Despacito* has already sold 500 million copies.
- ▶ **Malú:** 6 August, 10.30pm. The female voice of Spanish pop.
- ▶ **Niña Pastori and Antonio Carmona:** 12 August, 10.30pm. Two of the most important Spanish flamenco artists.
- ▶ **Andrea Bocelli:** 15 August, 10.30pm. The living legend returns to Starlite.
- ▶ **Ben Harper:** 16 August, 10.30pm. A powerful song writer and composer.
- ▶ **Noche Movidia:** 18 August, 10.30pm. Artists from the 80s and 90s.
- ▶ **Jason Derulo:** 24 August, 10.30pm. A fusion of electronic rhythms and funk with Caribbean and urban sounds.

# Flamenco festivals

## Malaga has plenty of flamenco festivals taking place throughout the summer

The local festivals are an excellent opportunity to enjoy the most authentic form of this predominantly gypsy art

**TONY BRYANT**

During spring and early summer, the southernmost part of Andalucía transforms into a kaleidoscope of colour and illumination. Dozens of local and national fiestas and celebrations take

place all over the province, including ferias, music festivals and cultural events of all genres. It is also the season of the time-honoured flamenco festivals that are staged in most towns and villages, and it is at these festivals that one will occasionally witness a little of the mysterious phenomenon that makes this art so special.

Flamenco festivals are excellent places to enjoy the best styles of gypsy flamenco and, although colourful and entertaining, they are more for the hardened dyed-in-the-wool aficionado.

One needs to possess great stamina to endure five or six hours of pure cante jondo (deep song), but if it is the real flamenco that one is seeking, then the traditional festival is the perfect ambience to enjoy it.

The festivals take place in an open field, an amphitheatre, bullring or playground and the mood is always relaxed and welcoming.

Unfortunately, many of these festivals have transformed into two and three day events and in doing so, they have lost much of the nostalgic festival ambience.

This is certainly the case with Seville's long-running flamenco Bienale, and even Malaga's version of this long drawn out festival has given over to flamenco fusion and flamenco pop.

The small town festivals are much more intimate and authentic, especially if there is a local artist appearing on the bill, whereas the larger events are now suffering from severe commercialisation, which has little to do with the true side of this predominantly gypsy art.

### Well established artists

Today, normally between the months of June and September, flamenco festivals are held throughout Andalusia and these are excellent opportunities to witness this art at its purest.

The festivals are organised by the local town council and each festival is preceded by a competition. Singers travel from all over Andalucía to compete for a first prize of around 3,000 euros, and a chance to appear in the festival alongside some of the biggest names in the business.

The festivals will usually promote one or two up-and-coming singers, as well as established artists such as El Cabrero, Manuel Moreno, Rancapino and La Cañeta de Malaga.

It will usually start around 11pm at night and go on until about 3.30 in the morning, or later depending on

Most of the flamenco festivals are dedicated to the singing. :: SUR





The festival in Alhaurín de la Torre presents some of the best flamenco artists on the Andalusian circuit. :: TONY BRYANT

the mood.

Most festivals are dedicated to singing, although there is always a dance spectacular half way through the night. The stage will consist of nothing other than a singer seated on the iconic high-backed Andalusian chair, accompanied by a guitarist who is hunched over his instrument like a vulture over its prey. They may be joined by a group of palmeras, the guys who clap out the intricate rhythms, and they will often break into a quick dance routine while the singer is performing.

The fin de fiesta, the end of party, is always a joyous occasion, because everyone who has performed will return to the stage to participate in the final song; usually a bulería.

This takes place around three or four in the morning, and yet the artists will still be charged with energy, seemingly never wanting to end the night.

### Malaga Cantaora

There are plentiful flamenco festivals in the province of Malaga and these events attract some of the greatest

artistes one could possibly hope to see. Malaga has long been associated with the flamenco song, giving rise to the popular line, Malaga Cantaora, in the poem, Andalucía, penned by Manuel Machado.

The season kicks off with the Torre del Cante, an excellent festival held in Alhaurín de la Torre, now in its fortieth year.

Numerous important festivals, most of which have been in existence for more than 25 years, are held in July and August. Entrance fees vary and one can expect to pay between five and twenty-five euros, although some are free.

Festival del Cante in Álora, normally held on the last Friday of July, is an intimate and truly traditional festival that attracts many named performers.

The Festival de Flamenco in Coín is another well attended event that also takes place on the last Friday of July. This is one of the free festivals and is held in the Plaza Bermúdez de la Rubia, in the centre of Coín.

The Festival de Cante Grande in Casabermeja is held on the Saturday

nearest to the festivities of Santiago and Santa Ana, usually towards the end of July.

Casabermeja has strong connection to the art of flamenco. The small enclave, which is nestled in the foothills of the Montes de Malaga, is famed for its Verdiales and fandaguillos, both of which evolved from the mountains that surround it.

The Luna Flamenca in Guaro has been running for over 25 years and this two-day event takes place on the second weekend in July.

The Festival Cante Grande in Ronda is one of the oldest flamenco festivals in the province of Malaga. Celebrated during the month of August in the picturesque Murallas del Carmen, this festival has a long and interesting history.

Ojén's Festival Flamenco Castillo del Cante is held on the first Saturday of August and this is another of the oldest in the province of Malaga.

Also the festival in Torremolinos, which has been running for 30 years, is another popular gathering of flamenco.

Held in the municipal auditorium close to the feria ground on the last Friday of August, this festival presents some of the top names on the circuit.

Fuengirola celebrates two festivals, the first of which is the Festival de Santa Fe, held on the second Saturday of July. The second, El Jabegote Juan de la Loma, is staged in the Palacio de la Paz in October.

Festivals are also held in Alcaucín, El Burgo, Benamádena, Mijas, Estepona, Alhaurín El Grande and Antequera.

For more information, [www.junta-deandalucia.es](http://www.junta-deandalucia.es)



The festivals are good places to witness authentic gypsy flamenco. :: TONY BRYANT



Malaga has plenty of good artists. :: T. B.



Rancapino in Torremolinos. :: T. B.

## FLAMENCO FESTIVALS IN THE PROVINCE OF MALAGA

► **Festival de Luna Flamenca Guaro - 14 and 15 July**

Free entry. Chelo Soto, Julián Estrada, Deli Membrive and Churumbaque Hijo. Dance: Begona Arce. [www.guaro.es/lunaflamenca](http://www.guaro.es/lunaflamenca)

► **Festival de Cante Grande Casabermeja - 22 July**

Pensioners: 10€ - Normal: 15€. Price of tickets on the day of the festival will be 20 euros. Manuel Moneo, Antonio Reyes, José Canela, Antonia Contreras, La Charo, Luis el Rubio, Luisa Muñoz y Javier Heredia. Dance: Patricia Valdez.

► **Festival de Flamenco in Coín - 28 July**

Free entry. Artistes to be confirmed. Information - [www.coin.es](http://www.coin.es)

► **Castillo del Cante Ojén - 5 August**

Homenaje de Fosforito. Tickets cost 25 euros. El Pele, La Macanita, Antonio Reyes and Pedro El Granaíno. Dance : Antonio de Verónica and Soray Cortés. [www.ojen.es/es/Festival\\_castillo\\_del\\_cante/](http://www.ojen.es/es/Festival_castillo_del_cante/)

► **Alcaucín Flamenco Festival Alcaucín Axarquía - 7 August**

Free entry. Artistes to be confirmed. [www.alcaucin.es](http://www.alcaucin.es)

► **Festival Flamenco Villa de El Burgo - 20 August**

Free entry. Julián Estrada, Laura Vital and Ríos Cabrillana. Dance: Moises Navarro

► **Festival de Cante Grande Ronda - 26 August**

Tickets cost 20 euros. Artistes to be confirmed. Information, [www.ayuntamientoronda.es](http://www.ayuntamientoronda.es)

► **Festival de Torremolinos - 26 August**

Tickets cost 10 euros. Artistes to be confirmed. [www.torremolinos.es](http://www.torremolinos.es)

A number of flamenco festivals are planned over the summer. :: SUR



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# Sand sculptures, street art created on a beach

**Torremolinos is just one Costa resort where masterpieces rise up from the sand**

The detailed work involved in making large figures out of 15 or 20 tonnes of sand is arousing a great deal of admiration among passers-by and people who come to spend a day on the beach

NANCY HAYDE / EFE

Donald Trump is having dinner with Mariano Rajoy and Angela Merkel - not in real life, but in the sand sculptures which are on view to all those who stroll along some of the beaches of the Costa del Sol. This is a form of street art, through which Spanish and foreign artists aim to surprise and interest passers-by.

"Slowly but surely," is the phrase that comes to mind when watching the laborious effort and the precise

detail involved in creating figures out of 15 or 20 tonnes of sand, to entertain the people who, for whatever reason, decide to take a walk beside the sea.

One of these little-known sand artists is called José Emilio Martín; he is from Malaga and has been sculpting sand for 11 years now. His latest work is a scene created with busts of Donald Trump, Mariano Rajoy and ten other internationally famous names in world politics, including François Hollande.

## Political figures

This work, entitled "The Last Supper" can be seen on the beach in Torremolinos, and the idea is for it to remain in place until the winter. This means that José Emilio has to look after it for 12 hours a day on the sandy beach beside the Mediterranean, sharing the task of guarding it with his Bulgarian assistant.

He says that all his hard work reaped its reward when he took part in the sand sculpture festivals in Mallorca, coming third and then second. His prize money has enabled him to continue his work, because on a day-to-day basis he lives from the tips left by tourists who admire his artistry.

It takes thousands of litres of water to make these large sand sculptures, as well as a process to refine the sand so it acquires the required texture, but of course the skill of these street artists who use their hands, spades and brushes to mould their creations, is also essential.

Just along the beach from José Emilio is 31-year-old Alberto. After working in retail and then becoming unemployed five years ago, he decided to try his luck as a sand sculptor.



Czech artist at work on Poseidon beach in Torremolinos.

:: EFE



The artist Afis works on a snowy scene depicting his Czech hometown. :: JORGE ZAPATA / EFE

His current work is a pirate throne with fire-breathing dragons and mermaids to brighten up the scene. The idea is for people to sit on the throne and have photos taken of themselves, after leaving him a tip.

Another of the sand sculptors is Afis, a Czech who has been living for two years in Malaga, where he has now formed a family. His training as a carpenter, and his memories of the region of the Czech Republic in which he grew up, were the inspiration for his latest work.

### Building his village

Afis has spent 293 hours working on this dedication to his village, where his parents still live, to keep it in his mind during his new life in Spain, which will enable him to provide better opportunities for his young son.

At 49 years of age and after losing his job in the construction industry, Jesús is another sand sculptor who is aware of how difficult it will be to find work again. He creates his sculptures in order to make a living, but he admits that he also enjoys doing it because he can mix his enthusiasm for football with his in-



The Last Supper by José Emilio Martín, in Torremolinos. :: EFE

terest in jungle life and the Romans. Jesús' work contains a large Real Madrid badge beside some tiny Roman huts, and a jungle in which a toy monkey dangles.

He says he changes his works every day, depending on what inspires him, because he doesn't want people to get bored by seeing the same thing for months on end.



KEN CAMPBELL

# Summer sky searching

## This is a great time of the year to start star gazing

Using the Plough as a starting point, it is then easier to locate the North Star, named constellations and the planets

KEN CAMPBELL

Astronomy is the oldest and easiest of all the sciences, you need nothing more than your own eyes to look up at the stars. The first astronomer was a caveman who sat outside his cave one night and looked up at the same stars that you can see and it made him wonder what was out there?

Later, the Greeks, Romans and Babylonians began to make out patterns in the stars called constellations and myths and legends were created to explain the various origins of the constellations. Heroes, heroines and mythical creatures can all be found among the stars and with a little practice, you can find all these for yourself.

At first glance, looking up at the sky it all seems just a random scattering of stars but once you learn one or two of the more conspicuous constellations you can use them to point you to others, much like signposts in the sky.

Start by first locating The Plough or as the Americans call it The Big Dipper. The Plough is made of seven, fairly bright stars that form a very conspicuous 'saucepan' shape with four stars forming the bowl of the saucepan and three stars depicting the curved handle. At this time of year The Plough can be found toward the Northwest standing upright with the 'bowl' pointing down and the 'handle' pointing up and curving away to the left. Let The Plough be your guide. Follow the two end stars of the 'bowl' up and towards the right and the first star that you come to is the North Star. The North Star, Pole Star or to give it its proper name Polaris, just happens to sit almost directly above the North Pole of the Earth and

so as the Earth spins on its axis then all the stars appear to revolve around this star. Whenever I ask people which is the brightest star they almost always name the North Star, but the North Star is not the brightest, in fact it only just makes it into the top 50 brightest stars at number 46.

### Scorpio the scorpion

Turn around with your back towards the North Star and face South. If you have a clear view of the southern horizon during the summer months you will see a bright red star called Antares. Antares marks the red eye of Scorpio the scorpion as it climbs up the sky. Scorpio is one of the few constellations that really does look like what it is meant to represent. The tail of the scorpion points down toward the horizon and curls up toward the left with two stars very close together forming the sting.

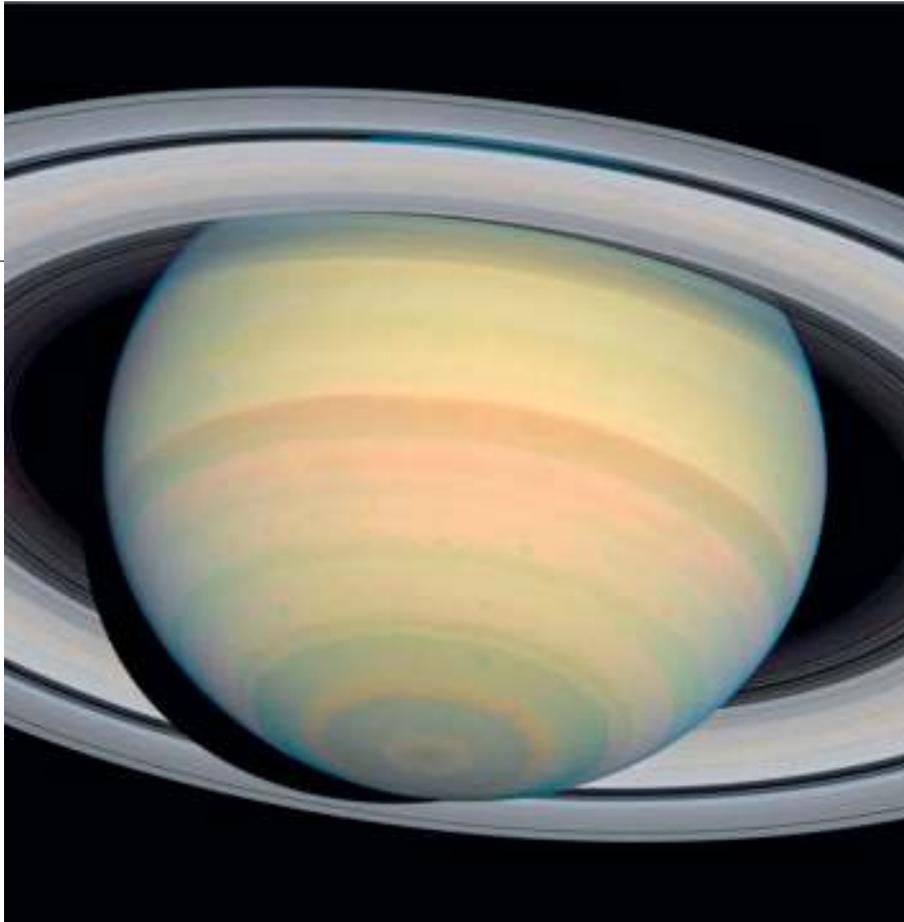
### Saturn, the ringed planet

Just to the left of Scorpio throughout the summer is a bright yellow coloured 'star'; this is the planet Saturn, the ringed planet. Through a telescope Saturn is a magnificent view and at the moment the rings are being displayed 'wide open' and are at their best. Even through binoculars Saturn appears oval shaped due to the rings.

### Massive Jupiter

Just to the right of Saturn is another bright 'star' that will be visible throughout the summer, this is the giant planet Jupiter, the largest planet in the solar system. Jupiter is easily recognised as being the brightest 'star' in the southwest sky. Again it can be viewed with binoculars but a





telescope shows details in the cloud belts circling the planet and with luck you may even be able to see its four largest moons as they orbit.

### Mercury, the smallest planet

On the last few days of July if you have a clear view of the western horizon you may be able to spot the smallest planet Mercury as it follows the setting Sun. Because Mercury is so close to the Sun, it never appears very far from it and is usually lost in the twilight sky but this summer Mercury will stay in the sky for about an hour after the Sun has set making it easier to see.

### Guided tours

If you would like to have a guided tour of the night sky then members of the Malaga astronomical society and the English-speaking Fuengirola astronomy society will be holding astronomy nights.

Each evening from 10 until 11.30pm throughout July and August, they'll be at the top of Calamorro mountain in Benalmádena. Take the cable car up the mountain from Tivoli World and you will find them with powerful telescopes at the open-air planetarium ready to show you the wonders of the night sky.



## THE BEST PLACES TO STARGAZE IN MALAGA

With a fairly basic telescope or even without, the province of Malaga is an excellent location to view the stars. Although summer is the best time to view constellations, many of these places are open all year round.

- ▶ **Astrolab, Yunquera.** The observatory is located at the entrance to the town on the old sentry tower.
- ▶ **Torcal observatory, Antequera.** Situated in one of the most important protected sites in Andalucía, this observatory offers courses and workshops suitable for everyone to learn about the stars, planets and other elements of the universe.
- ▶ **La Maroma, Canillas de Aceituno.** Also known as the Tejada peak, the top of this mountain is around 2,000 metres above sea level so there is no chance of light pollution. However you will need to be an experienced mountaineer to climb the peak on a moonlit night.
- ▶ **Serrato.** This Malaga village is recommended for star gazing by some of the most reputable astronomy groups in Spain. At 560 metres above sea level it is surrounded by mountain ranges which keep it sheltered from wind.
- ▶ **Open air planetarium, Benalmádena.** The cable car takes you up to the top of Monte Calamorro, one of the best view points on the Costa del Sol. The Aula del Cielo group offer their knowledge and experience, as well as some powerful telescopes, in several courses and workshops.
- ▶ **Venta de la Leche, Alfarfate.** The highest village in Malaga province is an ideal situation to look at the night sky. The area known as Venta de la Leche is on the road to Zafarraya.
- ▶ **Refugio de Alamut, Valle de Abdalajís.** Although this rural hotel has only one telescope, the proprietor, Mari Carmen, will explain the mysteries of the universe.
- ▶ **Los Quejigales, Ronda.** Just 10km from the San Pedro - Ronda road, on the Conejeras access, this is a great place to see the stars although you'll need permission to go into the Sierra de Las Nieves natural park at night.

# Parks and attractions on the Costa del Sol

## WATER PARKS

### Aqualand Torremolinos

Recreational waterpark for the whole family with different slides, wave pool, whirlpools.  
C/ Cuba, 10. 29620 Torremolinos  
[www.aqualand.es/torremolinos](http://www.aqualand.es/torremolinos)  
Opening times: May, June, September, October 10am-6pm, July and August: 10am-7pm. Admission: 28 euros, concessions 19 euros, discounts available online.

### Parque Acuático Mijas

Waterpark for the whole family with different slides. A-7, km 209, 29640 Mijas Costa, Telephone 952 460 404.  
[www.aquamijas.com](http://www.aquamijas.com)  
Opening times: June: 10.30am - 6pm, July and August: 10am - 7pm. 1-11 September: 10.30am - 6pm. 12-29 September: 10.30am - 5.30pm. Admission: adult 24.50 euros. Family discounts and multi-day tickets, discounts available online.

### Aquavelis

Waterpark with various giant slides and wave pool.  
Ruta del Pomelo, Urb. El Tomillar, 29740 Torre del Mar. Telephone 952 542 758, [www.aquavelis.es](http://www.aquavelis.es). Opening times: June and September: 11am - 6pm, July and August: 11am - 7pm. Admission approx: 23.50 euros, Discounts for children and groups, season tickets, online tickets.

## ANIMAL PARKS AND ZOOS

### Selwo Marina

Dolphinarium Animal Park with five zones: Las Antillas, La Hondonada, Ice Island, Amazonia and Los Trópicos; shows with dolphins, exotic birds, penguin feeding.  
Parque de la Paloma. 29630 Benalmádena, Telephone 902 190 482, [www.selwomarina.es](http://www.selwomarina.es). Opening times: June: 10am - 7pm. 1 - 10 July: daily 10am - 11.30pm. August: daily 10am - 11.30pm. 1 - 11 September, 10am - 8pm. 12 September - 31 October 10am - 6pm. Admission: 11-65 Years 19.90 euros, concessions 15 euros. Reductions, season tickets, combination and online tickets.

### Sea Life

Interactive aquarium with marine animals to visit, touch and feed. Puerto Marina.



Selwo Aventura. :: SUR

29630 Benalmádena. Telephone 952 560 150.

[www.visitsealife.com/Benalmadena](http://www.visitsealife.com/Benalmadena)  
Opening times: June: 10am-6pm, July: 10am - 8pm, August: 10am - 12am. Admission: 16 euros, concessions 13 euros, sea-sun tickets, online saver tickets.

### Selwo Aventura

Selwo Aventura. Wildlife Adventure Park. Different routes for visitors to see animals and plants from around the world and in some cases to handle. 29680 Estepona, A-7, km 162.5. Telephone 902 190 482. Web: [www.selwo.es](http://www.selwo.es).  
Opening times: June 10am - 6pm, July and August: 10am - 8pm. September 10am - 6pm/7pm. Admission: 10-65 years 24.90 euros, Concessions 17 euros; Combined tickets and season tickets available. Online discounts available.

### Bioparc Fuengirola

Animal park with exotic animals and trees such as the baobab tree. Avda. Camilo José Cela, 6. 29640 Fuengirola. Web: [www.bioparcfuengirola.es](http://www.bioparcfuengirola.es).  
Opening times in August: 10am - 11pm. In September, 10am - 7/8pm (see dates). Admission: 18.90 euros, Concessions 13.90/14.90 euros; family tickets and season tickets available.

### Butterfly house

Benalmádena: Largest Butterfly House in Europe. Av. de Retamar, 29639 Benalmádena. Opening times: daily from 10am - 8.30pm. Tel. 951 211 196  
[www.mariposariodebenalmadena.com](http://www.mariposariodebenalmadena.com). Admission: Adult 10 euros, Concessions 8.50 euros. Online discounts available.

### Lobo Park

Wolf Park with wolves in natural habitat, seminars on wolves and dog training, guided tours. Carretera Antequera-Álora, km 16, Antequera. Telephone 952 301 107.

[www.lobopark.com](http://www.lobopark.com). Opening times: daily 10am - 6pm. Admission adult 11 euros, children 7 euros. Guided tours at 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 4.30pm.

### Crocodile Park

Theme park with crocodiles, turtles and exotic birds. Tours and demonstrations. C/ Cuba, 14. 29620 Torremolinos. Telephone 952 051 782. [www.cocodrilospark.com](http://www.cocodrilospark.com). Opening times until Sept. 10am-7pm; October: 10am - 6pm. Admission: adult 16 euros, Concessions 12 euros.

## OTHER

### Tivoli World

Theme park with more than 40 attractions such as big wheel, roller coaster, ghost train, go-karts, drop tower. Shows for children and adults, various themed restaurants. Avda de Tivoli s/n, 29630 Arroyo de la Miel. Telephone 952 577 016. [www.tivoli.es](http://www.tivoli.es). Opening times. Until 11 September 5.30pm - 1.30am. Admission: 7.95 euros, Children under 1 metre tall and over 65s free. 14.95 euros for unlimited rides. Online discounts available.

### Amazonia - Climbing park

Climbing and adventure park with rope bridges and climbing routes. C/ Valeriano Rodríguez, 29604 Marbella, 952835505. [www.aventura-amazonia.com/parques-amazonia/marbella](http://www.aventura-amazonia.com/parques-amazonia/marbella). Opening times: July and August: 10am - 9pm. Admission: adult 24 euros, Discount for children and groups.

### Funny Beach

Attractions on land and at sea, go-karts for children and adults, trampoline, parasailing, banana boat on the sea, wakeboard, zodiac, jetski. Marbella, N-340, km 184. Telephone 952 823 359. Web: [www.funnybeach.com](http://www.funnybeach.com). Opening times: June 11am - 9pm. July and August: 11am - 12am. Price according to attraction.

### Costasol Cruceros

Boat trips Fuengirola - Benalmádena, departures between 10.30am and 5.45pm. Trip prices from adult 14 euros, children 8 euros.

Dolphin trips: Daily in summer, adult 16 euros, children 8 euros. Reservation required

Fuengirola port, Local 49, Benalmádena port, Avda. Antonio Machado 31, Edificio 1. Telephone 678 618 585. [www.costasolcrueros.com](http://www.costasolcrueros.com).



Water park. :: SUR

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