

A Life in

SPAIN

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inside...

South Town

Aledo

North Town

Alicante

Top 9

Best Spanish Islands

ISSUE 41
FEB 2020

FREE

Wine Article

Let's Talk Wine



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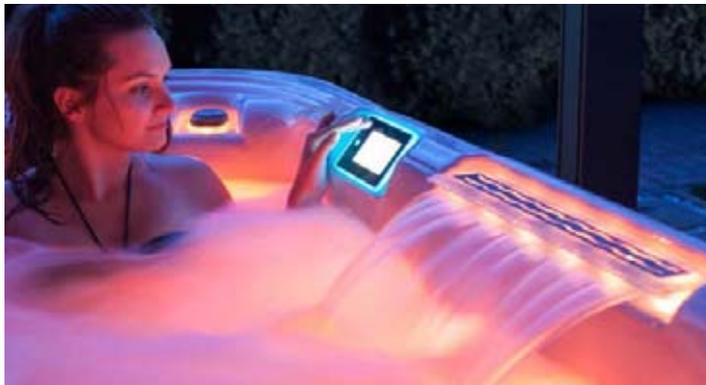
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A Life in SPAIN

Welcome to the February edition of ALIS.

Firstly I have to draw your attention to a charity event that is happening imminently at Condado Club. This is a well worthy cause and needs all our support. See advert on Page 7.

So what's in this edition....

The blog from Carol Hughes continues. Mapping out their journey and time in Spain. See page 28

Then on pages 19-22 we have the top 9 Best Spanish Islands. these are all accessible from the mainland so no excuses, go visit!!

Whilst on page 27 we have an article about the History of Flamenco Dancing. A great insight into how and where this dance originated.

Enjoy!

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Places To Visit In A Day

Caravaca de la Cruz



Caravaca can be accessed from several directions. Murcia, Lorca, Totana and Alhama provide attractive approaches to the town, either over the Espuñas, or on well signposted Motorway or trunk roads. The town has a population exceeding 20,000 and is steeped in history as shown by the many buildings, religious and otherwise, which can be found just by walking around.

The castle is well preserved and according to legend (for it is unlikely to be totally true) during a Moorish siege, the besieged troops, having been sent to find water, came back with wine instead. This so fortified those inside the castle they beat off the attackers who surrendered. There is now a celebratory Fiesta de la Vera Cruz at the beginning of each May. The highlight is the Race of the Wine horses, which is a sight to behold.

Within the 15th century castle is the impressive shrine, The Santuario de la Santisima y Vera Cruz and the Church Museum, open to the public Sunday to Thursday.

The miracle performing double armed cross of the region is said to have appeared miraculously before the Moorish Prince, Abu Said who then converted

to Christianity. Within the Santuario is an impressive shrine to the cross.

There is a lovely old town area which is worth a good walk around. You will find the Iglesia El Salvador and an impressive 18th century town hall in the Plaza del Arco.

There is a 16th century Carmelite Monastery in the Calle Mayor with a small ecclesiastical museum and lots of souvenir shops where the double armed cross in all sizes and prices can be bought. It is said that if you buy one for a friend and they put it in their car, they will not have an accident.

All in all, with a host of bars and restaurants, a great place to spend a day.



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5 tips to drink better and not "to Forget"

There are many people who in recent days have paid taxes and adjusted our waists to thicken the coffers. Apart from this and as a cause of this situation, the idea of drinking to forget has come to my mind, but I have come to the conclusion that it is so much better to drink to enjoy life than to forget bad moments ;so this is my motivation to write this blog entry!

1-. Choose a wine that is to your liking! It sounds like bulls**t but let me explain myself. If I am a person with a high tolerance for intense flavours, for instance, I like to drink black coffee, intense dark chocolate or salty foods; I will be a drinker who accepts and enjoys structured wines and specifically tannin reds. So enjoying a cabernet sauvignon, a Malbec like Altos las Hormigas from Argentina, a Murcian monastrell like Parajelas Zorreras, or a rich Syrah like Xi'lpal, will be a pleasure for me to drink.

If I am a sensitive drinker, who prefers soft flavours, it may be more appropriate to start with a garnacha of Cebreros like "Berrakín", or a subtle pinot Noir like Bassus. They are less blunt and very fluid reds, and no less interesting than the previous ones. You can also go around a white or a rose wine. Since they are wines normally without tannins and less structured than reds and therefore will satisfy my subtle palate.

2-. Whites go with everything. We are badly accustomed to the fact that white wines are mandatory of the last vintage, or are exclusive for starters and snacks. And it is increasingly noticeable that whites are great wines for all food. If we talk about gastronomic wines, Allende Blanco or Capellanía are wines that can make us enjoy from the beginning to end of a full menu. And if we are brave, it is more than advisable to try the Albillo Real grape of "Vino Precioso 2011", a dry Pedro Ximenez wine like "Fermentacionlenta", or even discover that the Verdejo grape aged in barrels gives us very strong and elegant wines such as the "Bestia Parda"

3-. Now you can drink pink! If the whites are made with white grapes and the reds with red grapes, but the rose wines are not made with pink grapes ... they can be made with both white and red grapes. It turns out that in Spain for many years the rosé was a "product" that was almost the result of the "left over" musts of the grape harvests ... And of course ... With that premise there was no way to make something rich. But for a few years, the processors have "put the batteries" and have decided to do them well. Rosés like the Eulogio Pomares "la Galaxia", Impromptu Pinot Noir by Hispano Suizas winery and the wonderful "Primer Rosé" that María Vargas does in Murrieta are a clear example of the fact that rosé can be great Wine.

These wines have been made thoroughly, selecting the grapes at the optimum time to make the wine well. And so they are balanced, as interesting as those whites that I mentioned in point 2, and with the aromatic notes of the red varieties that make them even more seductive.

4-. Not only of bread the man lives. And wine is not just for eating. Luckily more and more we see that people are parking the spirits and the beers in the afternoon to enjoy a delicious wine. And is that drinking a glass of wine at any time, snack, table, in the afternoon and even because we feel like it is a fashion practice; Not only because we are eating. It is true that for all of us wine is the best secondary actor of a good meal, but more and more you want to drink a wine at any time. This practice is apart from very healthy (which we will tell you in next article) a good habit, since among other things that of wine is one of the main industries of our country ... And if we value it and consume We are regularly contributing to enrich one of our main industries. So it is a common good!

5-. Drink goods. We have all heard about "we are what we eat" and it is almost an absolute truth, because we are also what we drink. The wines that are made with care, that are not manufactured industrial products, that come from concrete and well-kept vineyards, and that are faithful to its grape, vintage, soil and climate; They are wines that are inevitably made with good raw material, great taste and by people who enjoy wine. It seems an evidence but we need to keep in our mind; With good grapes winemakers can make good wines. So as wine lover, La Diligente people prefer to know and choose wines made by wine makers that love what they do, and that make us feel good.

These 5 ideas can serve us very much when we order or buy a wine; but if you still have any doubts you already know that in our store in El Jimenado, in our Bar-^a-Vinsin the "Mercado de Correos" in Murcia and even online shop www.ladiligente.es you can find us and we will be happy to help you choose well.



Wine of the month

Parajes del Valle 2018

Grape variety: Monastrell 100%, DO Jumilla

Old vineyard from the high-land in Jumilla, 880m over the sea level.

12 month ageing conquer tanks.

It is characterized by intense, jammy fruit and smooth, fresh aromas with a medium body and an inviting and persistent back palate which indicates a wine with a good life ahead of it. It is serious and lively on the mouth with freshness and a great balance; broad and flavoursome combining fruity freshness and the elegant structure of a wine that is suitable for ageing.

Pairing: Perfect partner for starters, salads and vegetables. Because of the smooth and elegant tanins it is a great wine to take with chicken and salmon, pork loin grilled or BBQ

The Challenge: Taste this fresh fruity red wine with carbonara pasta. The red berries aromas and tastes will make a perfect match with the cream sweet notes of bacon.



You can find and buy this wine in LA DILIGENTE.

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A Life in
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Spanish Walks

Spain has some of the most diverse countryside in Europe. With spectacular mountain ranges and vast open spaces. We have discovered some excellent walks and over the next few months we will help you to discover them as well. Good luck and enjoy.

Nijar - Los Escullos

The rugged mountain and rocky landscape of Cabo de Gata is isolated and geologically one of Europe's most special. The Sierra de Gata mountain range is the largest volcanic rock formation in Spain, with sharp peaks and ochre-colored steep rocks.

This beautiful walk will introduce you to the rugged but beautiful nature of the Cabo de Gata. The route starts on a narrow stony path up to the main road. Follow the main road for a short while and then turn right. It is allowed to climb over the fence that you reach after a short while. The walk then continues on unpaved roads. You do not hear anything other than the song of birds. Along the way you also have a beautiful view of the Mediterranean Sea a few times

Courtesy of www.trailexplorer.eu

Distance: 8.5 km

Duration: 3 h

Grade: Easy

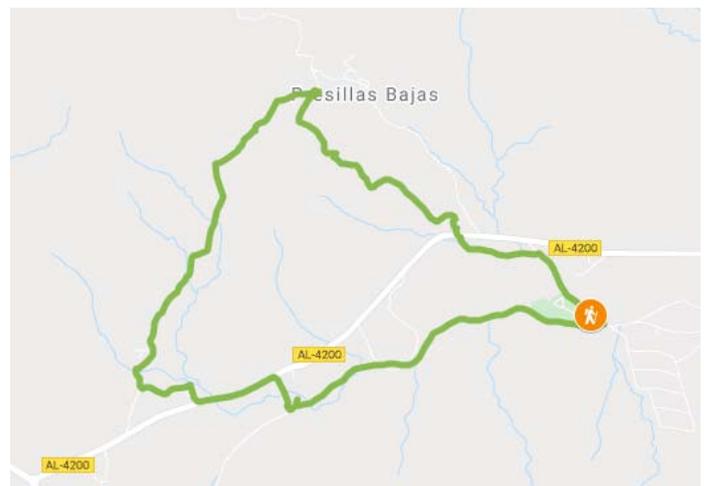
Type: Circular

Height gain: 140 meters

Way mark: None

Wheelchair: Not suitable

Dog: Allowed on a lead



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Let's Learn Spanish

Barbershop

Phrases

I'd like to get a haircut.
 I'd like a shave.
 Don't touch the top, please.
 Would you like side or centre parting?
 I would like a new style
 Do you want it thinned?
 I'd like to get my hair layered.
 How much is it...?
 Wash, cut and blow-dry
 What product would you recommend?

Me gustaría cortarme el pelo.
 Me gustaría afeitarme.
 No toque la parte de arriba.
 ¿Quiere la raya al lado o al medio?
 Quiero un nuevo estilo
 ¿Quiere que le haga un vaciado?
 Quiero capas.
 ¿Cuánto cuesta...?
 Lavar, cortar y peinar
 ¿Qué producto me recomienda?

May gus-ta-ree-ah core-tar-may el pay-loh
 May gus-ta-ree-ah core-tar-may laspoon-tas
 No tow-key la par-tea day a-ree-bah
 Key-er-rey-lahray-yah al la-doh oh al may-dee-oh?
 Key-er-oh oonnwe-bowess-tea-loh
 Key-er-e kay lay a-gaonba-thee-oh
 Key-er-oh ka-pass
 kwan-toe kwes-ta
 La-var, core-tar e pay-nar
 ¿Kay pro-dook-toemehrey-coh-mee-en-da?

Vocab

Mustache	Bigote	Bee-go-tay
Beard	Barba	Bar-bah
Goatee	Perilla	Pe-ree-ya
Sideburns	Patillas	Pa-tee-yas
Shave	Afeitado	A-fai-ee-tah-doh
Dandruff	Caspa	Kas-pa
Spiky hair	De punta	De poon-ta
Fade	Degradado	De-gra-dah-do
Mirror	Espejo	Es-peh-ho
Wash unit	Lavacabezas	La-va-ka-bea-thas
Towel	Toalla	Toe-eye-ya
Scissors	Tijeras	Tea-hair-ass
Comb	Peine	Pay-nay
Hair dryer	Secador	Seh-kah-door
Shampoo	Champú	Cham-pooh
Hair conditioner	Acondicionador	Ah-con-dee-thee-yon-ah-door
Razor	Navaja de afeitarse	Nah-bah-ha day Ah--tar
Hair spray	Laca	La-ka



Now try our wordsearch:

U V E H R U U D Z W Y R F G P J
 K E Z H S Y R M I D K Y X E T G
 N S W A B W C H A M P U R F V T
 K N A P S A C L H B S I Q Y I T
 A C M Z W Y R I N U L Y T J J E
 L F T S T W N B A L N Q E C V S
 L G D E G R A D A D O R V N G P
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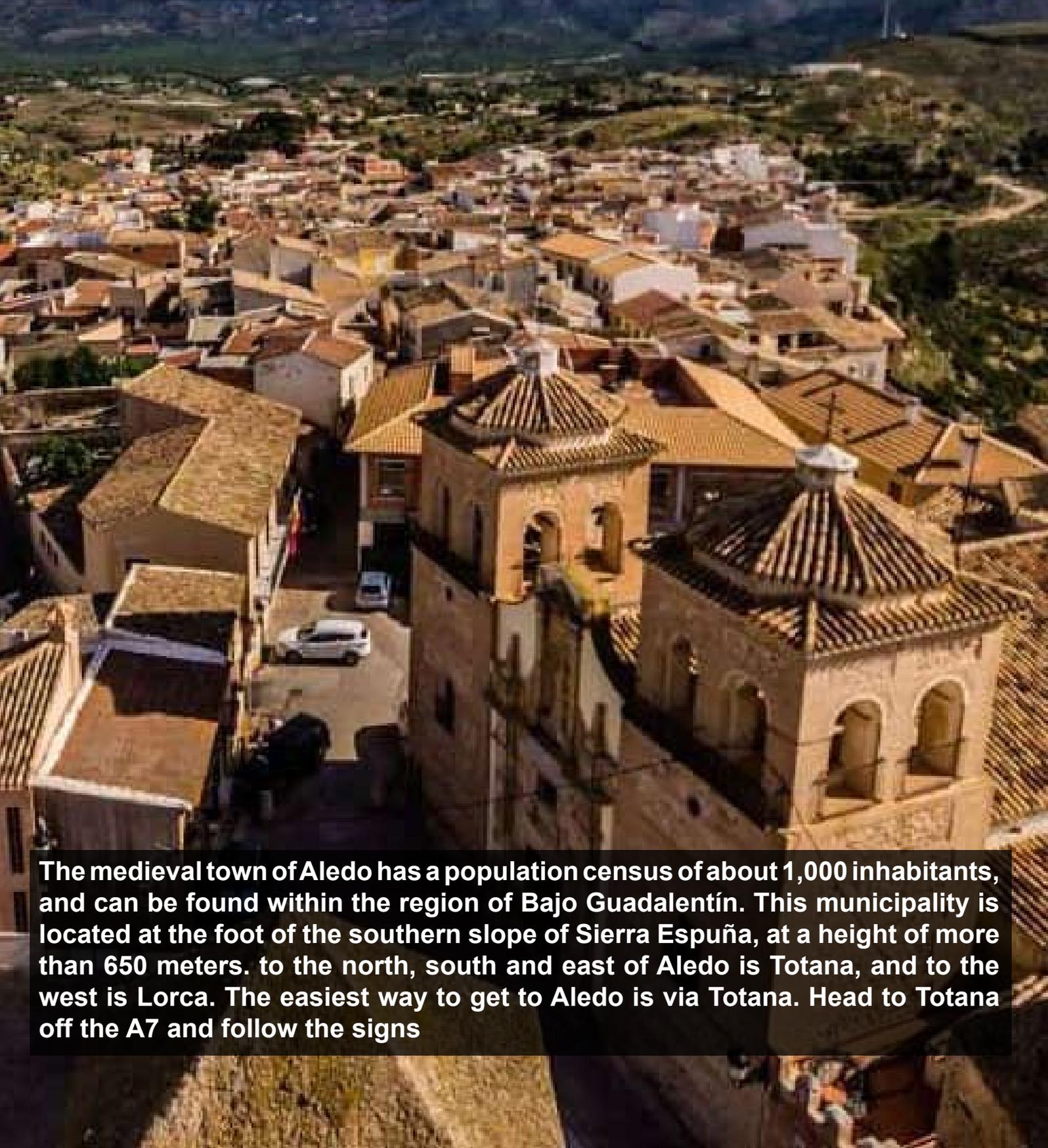


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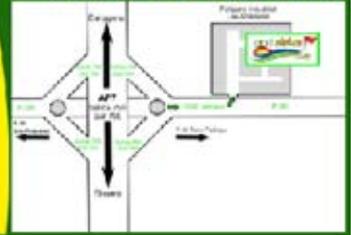


The medieval town of Aledo has a population census of about 1,000 inhabitants, and can be found within the region of Bajo Guadalentín. This municipality is located at the foot of the southern slope of Sierra Espuña, at a height of more than 650 meters. to the north, south and east of Aledo is Totana, and to the west is Lorca. The easiest way to get to Aledo is via Totana. Head to Totana off the A7 and follow the signs



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The first records about Aledo dates back to the tenth century, and is of Muslim domination, who used Aledo as a fortified position. The main villa becomes a fortress around the 11th century when it was dominated by Christian population. Aledo, it's castle, alhama, villages and dependencies were given by Alfonso X El Sabio, (who is believed to have written some of his Partidas in that castle) to the Master of the Order of Santiago, Palay Perez Correa, as a reward for his victories Against the Muslims.

Aledo's first settlers gained the right to carry the motto 'of Very Noble and Loyal' within its shields for their courageous interventions in different military campaigns, included between the stages of Felipe III, in the defense of Cartagena, Passing through Felipe V, in the War of Succession and the War of Independence.

Aledo is next to several hills and mountains. The highest of them are located to the north and south

within the slopes of Sierra Espuña, as well as the Mountain range of Tercia. It is worth noting that it is surrounded by idyllic natural landscapes, such as the natural park of Sierra Espuña and the canyon excavated on rock "Strait of Arboleja", located in the Rambla de Lebor, as well as the Cave of the Mauta, which can be found in the Head of the Rambla de losMolinos

There are some quaint little gift shops, and fantastic views where on a clear day you can see the Mediterranean. Combine your trip with a drive into the Sierra Espuña for even more breath taking views.



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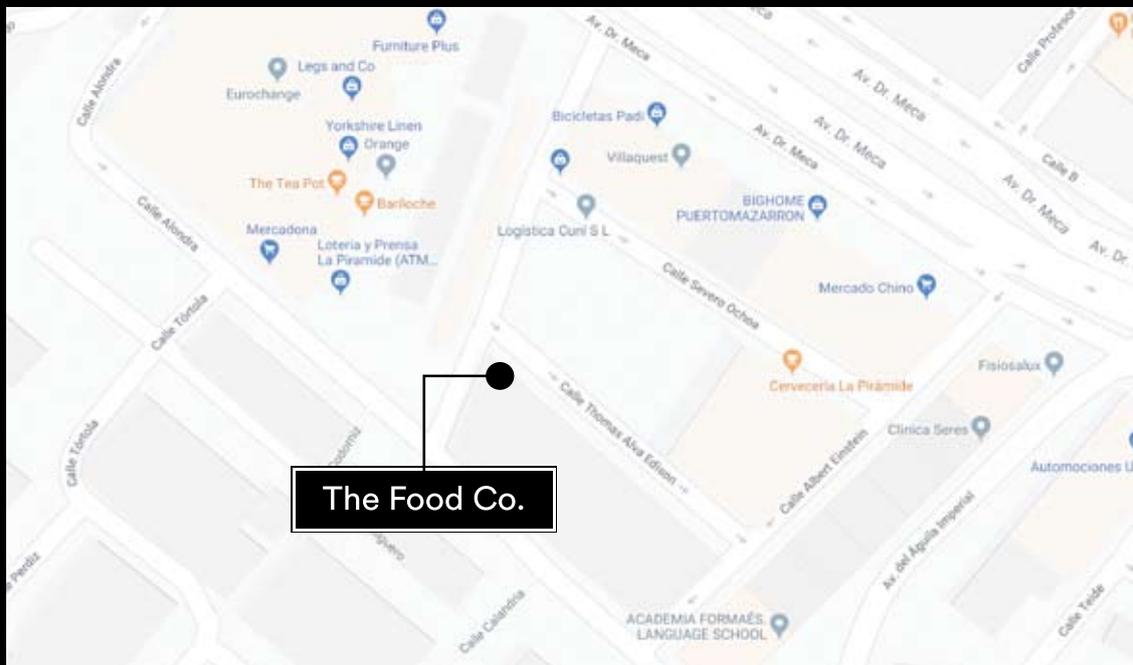
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9 Best Spanish Islands

9. La Gomera

One of the smaller of the Canary Islands, La Gomera was the place from which Christopher Columbus started his voyages of discovery. The island can be reached by ferry from Tenerife and is a good place for walking holidays.

The island has excellent climate and a huge variety of unique plants and a beautiful forested area, rock outcroppings and waterfalls. The island is not developed for tourism, so there are not the crowds found on other islands.



8. Minorca

Minorca (also Menorca) is a less developed island and a good place for a beach holiday away from the crowds. It has more beaches than any other Spanish island, so there is a good chance visitors can find a secluded one to themselves.

Along with the unspoiled scenery are prehistoric monuments which date from 1300 BC.



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7. Formentera

Formentera is a small island south of Ibiza and well known for nude sunbathing on many of its pristine, white sand beaches. It can be reached from Ibiza by boat and there is regular passenger service from mainland Spain.

This is the place families and nature lovers go for a relatively isolated beach holiday. However, in the peak season of July-August, the island draws huge numbers of tourists. There is a dramatic cliff, La Mola with a lighthouse that is worth seeing.

6. Fuerteventura

Fuerteventura is famous for its strong winds and is a popular place for kite surfing and wind surfing. Parts of the island are well developed for beach holidays and other places are untouched.

It is also famous for its broad sand dunes and over 150 beaches. Corralejo, a town on the northern tip of the island, is considered to have the best beaches.

5. Lanzarote

Lanzarote has a stark volcanic landscape on a quarter of the island from a volcanic eruption in 1730, which is the Timanfaya National Park. The park has a bar and restaurant where the meat is cooked over underground heat.

Other attractions are the Whales and Dolphins Museum and the Mirador del Rio a lookout point with a spectacular view.





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4. La Palma

La Palma is called The Beautiful Island and is the closest to Morocco of the Canary islands. It has an international airport and ferries to Tenerife.

La Palma has spectacular countryside and is also a good place for walking tours and hiking. The largest crater in the world is in the center of the island and guided hikes are available to the area. There are other paths to stunning volcanic scenery and forests.



3. Gran Canaria

Gran Canaria has one of the largest cities in Spain. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria is on the northeastern coast of the island and is a well-developed beach holiday destination.

The island has many different types of landscapes including majestic sand dunes, mountains with biking trails, beaches and a

densely populated underwater world. There are excellent diving spots, golf, surfing schools and hiking to the remarkable cave villages in the centre of the island.



2. Tenerife

The largest of the Canary Islands, Tenerife is well developed for tourism and a very popular beach holiday destination. It is renowned for its exciting nightlife and excellent dive sites.

There are also many watersports available including surfing, wind surfing, parascending and jet-skiing. For those who love mountains, there are scenic drives along rocky cliffs and a cable car to the top of the highest peak in Spain. Hikers can also climb the mountain, but it is a challenging adventure.



1. Ibiza

Ibiza is famous for its nightclubs, parties and beaches. Ibiza Town and San Antonio are the most popular places for nightlife. They don't get started until after 7 p.m. and stay open until early morning.

During the day, there is a carnival-style market where fresh food and handicrafts can be purchased, as well as some beautiful natural scenery. The Cova de Can Marca is a huge natural cave worth seeing and visitors can take a boat to the nearby island of Formentera.



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Xorret De Cati.

Sunday 19th November 15 of us all met at the shop at 8am and loaded ourselves and our bikes onto and into various cars and vans and headed for Novelda. We arrived at 8.45am and proceeded to the nearest bar for coffee and a tostada before unloading the bikes and getting our kit ready. It was a very cold morning with quite a sharp wind. Once we were watered and fed we prepared our bikes and left Novelda picking up the road to Monovar. At Monovar we picked up the CV83 to Elda and Petrar, navigating through Petrar was a nightmare but we made it and cycled across the Madrid motorway and headed for Castalla, we were now on a single track road with passing places and it wasn't long before we came to our first climb followed by a very steep incline which forded a river which was only about 8" deep, however the stones were very slippery and covered in slime, one of the guys miscalculated and fell off into the water and another one of the guys landed on top of him, so that was both of them soaking wet on a really cold day (not a good start).

After passing through the river it was a sharp left hand turn straight into a 24% ramp, most of the guys were in the wrong gear and struggled to keep their wheels turning so a few of them had to get off and walk up pushing their bikes. At the top we sorted ourselves out and proceeded on the route, most of the guys were climbing Xorret de Cati for the first time and found it pretty tough going, however we were rewarded by a fantastic downhill for about 8kms all the way into Castalla where we stopped for a well deserved coffee in the town square.

After leaving Castalla it was quite a simple ride to Ibi where we followed the road to Xixona then Sant Vicente del Raspeig where we picked up the road to Agost and then headed back to Novelda. This was a brilliant day out and a great route which took us 5 hours and covered 140k with just over 2000m of climbing, some fantastic scenery and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. This route has been part of La Vuelta (Tour de Spain) many times and this year a few of the domestics were forced to walk up due to the nature of the beast, well worth a visit but not for the faint hearted. The Route is number 40 in our second volume of bike routes and maps.



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History of Flamenco dancing

Flamenco is one of the most characteristic elements of Spanish culture, especially throughout the southern region of Andalucía. Which is why several schools offer Spanish and Flamenco courses, where you can learn Spanish while learning how to dance flamenco.

History of Flamenco Dance

To point out the stomping feet and fiery passion is merely brushing the surface of flamenco dance. Flamenco dance, as one-third of the quintessential Spanish phenomenon of flamenco, has an extensive historical background that parallels the cultural development of Spain itself.

Hailing from southern Spain's outcast populations, flamenco dance and music drew early influences from the Greeks and Romans and later from Indian, Moorish, and Jewish cultures. With the arrival of the Moorish and Jewish populations to the Iberian peninsula centuries ago, Andalusia's already thriving music and dance inadvertently began extracting characteristics from the newly-arrived populations. The flamenco dance and music that we see today are the dazzling results of centuries of absorbing and flawlessly sewing together elements of this myriad of diverse cultures.

With the flourishing development of flamenco music emerged the equally rapid evolution of flamenco dance, which first appeared recognisably as a structured dance in the 18th century. While flamenco's design in its origin revolves around the hearty voice of the singer, the impassioned flamenco dancers stunned audiences in special music cafés - called cafés cantantes - and quickly began stealing the show. Centuries of cultural melding later, what ironically began in caves as a form of personal expression by gypsies and other oppressed ethnicities has evolved into the flashy flamenco dance and music that has taken the world by storm.

Flamenco Dance Technique

Flamenco Dance

While the common denominators of passion and fervor never waiver, there is no one single flamenco dance. In fact, depending on the criteria of mood intention, the set of melodic phrases and the cultural traditions behind each song, flamenco dance actually manifests itself in more than 50 distinct palos (types of flamenco dance)! Both flamenco music and flamenco dance involve a great deal of personal improvisation which takes its form through the spontaneous expression of the performer's emotions at each moment of the performance. However, personal expression must adhere to the strict framework of flamenco music's traditions and rhythmic patterns.

Flamenco Dancers

In a flamenco performance, the dancer - or bailaor(a) - will often stand motionless for the first moments absorbing the strums of the guitar, the clapping, and the singing until the inspiration hits him/her. Then he or she will launch into a flamenco dance every bit as passionate as the song being belted out by the cantaor- you can even see the explosion of emotions in the dancer's facial expressions throughout the performance.

The role of the flamenco dancer is essentially to physically interpret the words - which often express the great lament of the persecuted ethnicities of flamenco's history - with light, graceful arm movements that contrast the reverberating steps as feet drill into the floor with a bewildering intensity. Duets, performed by a man and a woman, are often the most vivid flamenco dances. The dancers keep their eyes firmly locked each other, constantly and aggressively building off one another in what becomes competition of passion, sexual tension, and emotion.



North Town...



ALICANTE

The province of Alicante is located in eastern Spain in the Autonomous Community of Valencia. Situated on the Mediterranean coast, in the region known as Costa Blanca, the province is bordered by Valencia to the north, Murcia in the south west and the Mediterranean Sea to the east.

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Alicante is one of the most popular provinces as a tourist destination, with the famous resorts of Alicante, its capital city, Benidorm, Denia, Elche and Torrevieja. Thousands of visitors flock here every year to enjoy beautiful blue flag beaches, all year mild climate, delicious cuisine and friendly, warm welcome from the locals.

History

Documented records show that the Iberians were the first inhabitants of the Alicante province and there are several archaeological sites in the region, which depict this era, one in particular is La Serreta (near Alcoy).

The area was subsequently occupied by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthagians, Romans, Visigoths, Moors and finally conquered by Ferdinand III in the 13th century.

At one point in history, the region formed a part of the Kingdom of Valencia.

Towns and villages of Alicante

The air in the capital city of Alicante is pervaded with the scents of the sea; indeed the city has been an important seaport for many centuries. There is nothing as pleasant as strolling along the quayside promenade lined by four rows of palms, tessellated with marble in Alicante red, cream and black in imitation of the waves of the Mediterranean.

In the centre of the La Marina Baja region, in the province of Alicante, is the popular Spanish resort of Benidorm, one of the main tourist destinations along the Costa Blanca. Its excellent beaches, wide variety of accommodation, restaurants and many recreational activities means it's a hit with tourists from all over Spain and Northern Europe.

At the heart of the Costa Blanca, within the province of Alicante, lies the ancient fishing village of Calpe. Calpe has a wonderful modern marina that sits alongside the old fishing port; from here it is possible to take boat rides around the rock and to the nearby resort of Benidorm.

Denia is a delightful cosmopolitan town that sits at the foot of a hill crowned by a castle. The city has well preserved ancient walls and bastions.

Javea is a small, historic town; free of high rise buildings offering a relaxing holiday atmosphere. The local people are friendly and affable. The clean, warm, blue Mediterranean Sea laps the beautiful beaches and coves that Javea has to offer.

Santa Pola is located approximately 20 minutes drive south of Alicante airport. A small fishing port, Santa Pola is famous for its variety of landscapes, from the views of the distant mountains to the wild sand dunes.

Benitachell is a tranquil and picturesque village, originally an Arab outpost, with a stunning coastline nearby, which is formed by a succession of cliffs of more than a 100m high that descend vertically into the sea.

Altea is without doubt one of the most charming towns to be found on Spain's 'White Coast', located in the region of Alicante on the Costa Blanca. The town is just 11 kilometres north of Benidorm, yet the two resorts are worlds apart. Altea is similar to other Costa Blanca towns in that it has a new and an old neighbourhood. The old section is perched on top of a hill from where you will find really spectacular views.

Cuisine

Try any of the delicious varieties of rice dishes, combined with shellfish, fish or meat that are renowned in the region of Alicante.

To complete your meal, Alicante has some excellent local wine denominations, and for dessert, don't forget the famous ice creams, Turrón and dates.

Climate

The province of Alicante enjoys a privileged location and an excellent mild climate, with an average year round temperature of 18-20° C.



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Environmental policy

Concern for the environment

Spain, although it can be considered a mountainous territory and semi-arid in many aspects, is home to a fauna and flora of great richness and biodiversity.

Spain is a habitat with over 8,000 plant species. Forests account for around 30% of the territory, although these do not always correspond to native species. Traditional reforestation practices carried out particularly in the late 19th century have led to an overall presence of pine and eucalyptus stands. Spain's environmental conservation policy was launched many years ago, and has been considerably enhanced in recent years.

One of the fundamental pillars of this government policy has been protection, by means of initiatives such as the National Parks, Nature Reserves and Game Reserves. However, most of these competences have now been transferred to the Autonomous Regions, who have enacted a range of different protection models.

The most important threats to the environment are deforestation (forest fires), erosion, desertification and contamination of river water. This problem is common to the whole of Europe, and the positive balance between agriculture, rational exploitation and conservation of the environment is one of the most important issues for the country.

Therefore both agriculture and tourism (which also affects the state of environmental conservation) are today strictly regulated, in order to allow these sectors to prosper and grow without affecting the environment. For all these reasons, Spain is a country with a strong—and increasing—commitment to conserving the environment.

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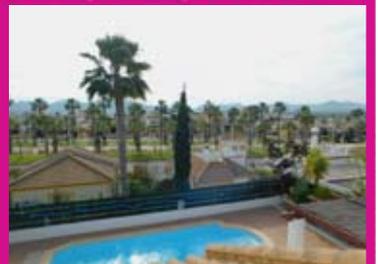
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There is a washing machine in the kitchen I am going to try it out. OooooH! bubbles everywhere soap suds are coming from everywhere, panic! I'm starting to think it already had detergent in and possibly not the right sort, hey ho, clothes will be clean. Charlie is just stood watching I think he thinks we have lost the plot!

My charming hubby decided to help me with the washing! He followed me outside into the yard wash basket in hand and shut door behind him Good..... No! the door opens from the inside! Idiot! He knew what he had done straight away his face was a picture. I just stood there open-mouthed; it was one of those things you know what you have done the min you have done it. Now what, keys inside, no phone, no car keys in the middle of nowhere, metal grills to the window (yes, the house is very secure) and big old wooden door.

Well, after a few mins panic hubby decided he will have to break the door. So, 30 mins later with a brick in hand he has managed to break a panel and reach up inside to the door handle to open the door. The joiner is coming tomorrow to fix the door! And I have one very apologetic hubby, I will get at least a week out of this..... we definitely need a spare key.

Ok, so where do you get keys cut? They don't do them at the supermarket. Social media to the rescue. Seemingly you get them cut at a ferreteria which is a hardware store, not a shop that sells ferrets! Now just to find one. Spoke to Peter he has proved to be a god send, he has given us loads of contacts and advice, he sorted all our insurances, Health Insurance, car insurance and home insurance. I highly recommend him you will find him at www.alifeinspain.com he told us to go to BigMat, bingo there is a counter inside for cutting keys.

I am not feeling very well I have had a cough since before Christmas following a bout of flu, I really need to go to the chemist. Great they don't speak any English and my Spanish is very limited so google translate to the rescue. After a lot of misunderstandings, she has given me two lots of medication.

So, I am off back to our freezing house to take them, once I work out the instructions! The instructions are

all in Spanish, google translate to the rescue again every word typed into translator Guess what? you can take a picture of the writing and Google translate will translate it for you, who knew? no, me neither found that a weeks later! Duh.

7th Feb

Think we may have woodworm in the bathroom door and one of the bedroom doors, Yuck, need to get a specialist in to have a look and treat it if necessary. I have spoken with a guy on the phone and he has asked if I can take some pictures and send them to him. Sent him a pic of my husband. He rang back laughing and said "that's one handsome worm! But can I have pictures of the door frame also." Ok so he has replied it is termites not wood worm. He is sending me some info over regarding them. Horrible little things they come up from the ground, the adults lay eggs. Then the larvae which look like little maggots set about just leisurely eating their way through your house, seemingly a lot of houses in Spain have them they are subterranean termites.

Pepe the Joiner has been and fixed the door, he is also giving us a quote to replace the internal doors and frames also treating new doors, so they don't get eaten by termites.

Swear my hubby is trying to kill me, he really has lost the plot. He has just made me a cup of coffee ahh lovely.... Not so he has used comfort instead of milk !!! how?!! How can you confuse Milk and comfort the only similarity is the colour?

8th Feb

I have a Money jar, ok had a money jar hubby just broke it!!!! Bet he was trying to steal it! Muppet.



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