

# All about The Rock



## Gibraltar rocks!



*Forget sunburned ex-pats and cheap booze, Jon Clarke discovers that the Med's little Britain has had a makeover*

**G**LIDING down the high street of Gibraltar it was impossible to miss Miss World.

But, incredibly, newly-crowned beauty Kaiane Aldorino, 23, went almost entirely unnoticed, without a snapper, autograph hunter or fan in sight, as she window-shopped and enjoyed a rare glimpse of Spring weather last week.

How different it was to her triumphant return in December, when 15,000 people turned out to cheer her crowning in South Africa.

"It is great to be back on the Rock," she told me, stopping for a chat outside Marks & Spencer. "After recent trips to Japan and Brunei there is something incredibly calming about the place."

"It is partly the unique location, but it is also the incredibly friendly people."

Aldorino, who scooped the crown in December, is set to become the first genuine Gibraltarian megastar, running fashion designer John Galliano into a clear second place.

Yet, Gibraltar has seen a long line of celebrities over the last few decades, the vast majority however, coming to tie the knot. Cheaper and quicker to marry in Gib than in

Turn to Page 11

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Picture by JON CLARKE

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From page 9

the UK. Luminaries of note include actors Sir John Mills, Sean Connery and even John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

The most recent was Status Quo star Rick Parfitt, who married fitness instructor Lyndsay Whitburn, before settling on the Costa del Sol, near Alhaurin.

Wedding snaps taken against the looming backdrop of the Rock - the 426-metre sheer limestone escarpment - must look spectacular. Not that Parfitt hung around long enough to visit the fascinating colony, that includes the only wild monkeys in Europe.

Parfitt and his new wife had departed the postage-stamp size state - which is just two-and-a-half miles square - within an hour of the nuptials.

A few years ago that might have been justified. The first time I visited the British protectorate in the early 1990s, the Rock was little more than a tacky, rubbish-strewn enclave, full of squaddies and Union Jack sticks of rock. Its best known restaurant was a Wimpy.

Known for the endless queues to get past the Spanish border guards - the frontier was shut until the early Eighties when reaching the Rock meant a long boat trip via Morocco - most visitors did little more than buy duty-free fags and sink a couple of pints of warm bitter. They might as well have been in Benalmadena.

But things have changed. Not only can you cross the border in under five minutes (having parked your car nearby in La Linea - for under five euros for the day), but the squaddies, who are now outnumbered by the monkeys, have been replaced by new tourist enterprises and a spruced up image. This means fashionable, waterside restaurants, a slick new marina at Ocean Village, trendy hotels and even Jazz evenings.

There are new cinemas, a new hospital, a brand new casino, as well as all the high street shops (M&S, BHS, Oasis, etc) you would expect in a lively British town.

Largely due to a rapprochement between Spain and the UK, there is plenty of new development going on and even talk of sharing Gibraltar airport, a huge step considering that until recently no Spanish plane could land here.

Flights now go to Madrid and Barcelona and there is even a new ferry taking regular trips to Algeciras.

"Gibraltar is a completely revamped product," says Dustin Orfila, of InvestGibraltar, a government body encouraging investment. "A decade ago it was scruffy and dirty, today it is cleaner and brighter and appealing much more to upmarket tourists.

The changes are seeing an increase of 1.5million tourists a year and the enclave has hardly felt the world recession at all. "Only the construction side has suffered," continues Orfila.

So what is on offer in Gibraltar? As well as beaches, splendid views and a fascinating history. It bristles with the remnants of the British Empire, with countless barges and gun emplacements at

## Super Gib



**ROCKING:** Parfitt tied the knot in Gibraltar

Battlements adorn the walls of the old town and in the evocative Trafalgar cemetery you can find the graves of those who died in the famous battle.

Nearby, on Rosia Road, is a monstrous 100-ton Victorian gun marking the spot where Nelson's body was brought ashore - his corpse had been preserved in a barrel of brandy that was later drunk by sailors for good luck. The naval hero had often visited the Rock while HMS Victory was repaired.

Strolling around, it is easy to appreciate how Gibraltar must have been on an almost permanent war-footing after seizing it from the Spanish in 1704. A series of bitter sieges ended in the construction of shelters and further gun emplacements inside the rock. Excavations didn't stop for over

200 years until, during World War II, there were an amazing 32 miles of tunnels inside the rock (many more than on the outside), and space to house 16,000 people.

Arguably the most impressive defensive system in the world - like a veritable Swiss cheese - you can now visit the often claustrophobic tunnel network.

Children will love exploring the passages that once held the office of General Eisenhower and thousands of troops, who often did not see daylight for months at a time.

The strategic reasons for such sacrifice are fully appreciated once you climb - or take the cable car - to the top.

Look inland to the pointed peaks of the beautiful Serrania de Ronda; and out to sea, across the Straits to the Rif Mountains of Morocco.

At 1,398 feet you are at the top of one of the mythical pillars of Hercules - the other Jbel Musa just across the sea in Africa.

Peering down at one of the busiest bottlenecks of water in the world (about 12 miles in width) it is easy to understand why Gibraltar has been a key naval base for centuries.

Whoever controlled the Rock, controlled the Mediterranean (See feature *I am the Med* on page 26), a fact not lost on the Phoenicians, who were the first civilisation to build a fortified base.

Following the demise of the Roman empire, the Rock eventually became a bridgehead for a Moorish assault, when in 711 the governor of Tangier Tariq ibn Ziryab led his troops to vanquish the disorganised rabble of Visigoths.

The Arabs went on to rule the area for seven centuries. The Rock was christened "Jbel Tariq", Gibraltar being an Anglicisation of it, rather like 'sherry' and 'Jerez'.

Nature lovers will enjoy the reserve that protects the top half of the rock. As well as boasting over 600 species of plants, it is one of the best places to watch the millions of birds that migrate between Europe and Africa every year.

But the main draw is of a hairy

**The main draw is of a hairy kind, it is here that you will find the only wild apes in Europe**



**WEDDINGS:** Gib is popular with celebs with Connery and Mills marrying there



**BEAUTY:** Miss Gib crowned world's best

Photos: © DM Parody (www.dofcom.gs/photos)

## It's so unique

*New Miss World on why she loves returning to Gib*

EXCLUSIVE

kind. For it is up here that you will find the only wild apes in Europe. Numbering some 250 or so, it is unsure exactly how the colony of tail-less Barbary macaques got here from North Africa.

While some say the Moors imported them, it is just as likely that they arrived when the continents were still joined. It was then that the Atlantic rose to breach the isthmus that linked them.

Either way, the monkeys - who divide into half a dozen troops - are a thoroughly entertaining bunch.

Swinging around, interacting with the visitors, grabbing handbags, snatching food, and generally being cheeky, you can spend hours watching them.

Such is their legend that it is said that their departure will herald the end of the English presence here - a superstition that so worried Sir Winston Churchill during WWII that he imported a few dozen more to ensure their survival.

One nearly got the better of me, when he crept up from behind and tried to grab my bag, which was luckily over my shoulder.

Heart pumping, I promptly began the hour or so stroll downhill into town.

The centre of Gibraltar is just as interesting. Closely reflecting the melting pot (Gibraltarians are a curious mix of Italian, Jewish, Maltese, British, Portuguese and German), many buildings have Portuguese tile façades, English wrought iron balconies and Genoese shutters.

Full of remnants of the former colony, one of the best places to take afternoon tea is at the Elliot Hotel in the centre, which has a terrific Jazz night once a week.

As I headed off up the road to San Roque and its famous golf course the following day, I looked back at the imposing landmark with completely different eyes.

Finally I could see what all the fuss was about. Our Rock is truly rocking!

NEW Miss World Kaiane Aldorino, 23, has told the *Olive Press* how she loves coming home to Gibraltar.

The hospital administrator, who won the title in December, said: "I love coming back to live a normal life again."

The down-to-earth girl continued: "It is totally unique, a really special place."

"There is nothing like the amazing views from the top, to Africa and into Spain."

"I also love the beaches, the lighthouse and the people are so friendly."

Aldorino beat favourite Miss Puerto Rico after triumphing in the swimsuit competition.

The bilingual beauty is about to set off on another trip to Korea, having just got back from Japan and Brunei.

She is still amazed at the 15,000 people who turned up to her victory parade. "There were more people than even National Day," she said.

Aldorino, whose boyfriend works on a cruise ship, was described by Chief Minister Peter Caruana as a "very special lady, who has put Gibraltar on the map!"

Denis MacShane MP, the former Europe Minister, described her win as "a victory for a Spanish-speaking European woman who live on the Mediterranean under the British flag."

He added: "I just hope she doesn't meet Tiger Woods."

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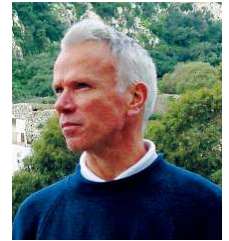
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**An outsider's view of Gib by Dale Nottingham**

I WAS never very good at history. At school, it clashed with cookery, which had more girls in it and gave me cakes to sell to the fat boys in the playground.

So when I was asked to write about my impressions of Gibraltar, following a two-day trip, I was a little surprised to say the least.

"Don't worry," said the man with the money. "We want an outsider's viewpoint, fresh and unpolluted by knowledge and understanding."

Well there was no arguing that one, so off I went; and an ignoramus on a mission.

As I took my place in the funeral procession of traffic, inching excruciatingly towards the frontier, it occurred to me that despite the smattering of negative comments I had heard about Gibraltar prior to my departure, it surely couldn't be that bad since half the world seemed to be trying to get in.

Having driven across the runway; a first for me – well, sober at least – I entered "Gib" proper.

"Welcome to the Rock," as Sean Connery famously said about somewhere completely different. Was this to be my Alcatraz?

With derring-do not seen since the Italian Job, I pointed my freshly re-sprayed bling-mobile at a four-foot slit between two buildings – through which even light cannot travel without losing a wing-mirror, but which passes for a boulevard in Gibraltar.

I closed my eyes, hit the gas and thought of the Queen in a funny hat. About eight seconds later, a man was opening my door, welcom-

## Brief encounter



**HOME COMFORTS: Gib brought back memories of Britain for writer Nottingham**



ing me to the delightfully appointed Elliot Hotel. This was indeed a small town. Having grown up in rural England, but not having lived there for the past 14 years, the very Britishness of Gibraltar – the red telephone boxes, the uniformed police constables and that uncanny knack the British have of living in places where it seems to rain all the

time – was all rather disconcerting.

However, as I began to walk the streets and talk to the people working in the innumerable shops, cafes and offices that all seem so cosily crumpled together on this diminutive outcrop, I began to detect a profound sense of community and collective identity among the inhabitants of this often cursed but always coveted place.

And never was this feeling of fraternity more evident than in my brief chance encounter with none other than the newly-crowned Miss World, Miss Gibraltar herself, Kaiane Aldorino.

I had been shuffling indigently down Main Street in the company of my sartorially suave publisher, when – gumshoe journo' that he is, – spots Miss World walking towards us.

Elbowing me in the side of the head – he is somewhat taller than me – he cries "ere, that's 'er", and darts off – in the best traditions of Fleet Street – in hot pursuit of the beauty queen.

During the ensuing pleasantries in which I was careful not to mention world peace, an old woman walks up to me, flashes a toothless grin and whispers conspiratorially into my ear; "she's one of us, she is."

So here I sit back in the vastness of Spain, reminiscing about my fleeting visit to the Rock, and reliving the many great experiences I had in that quirky little place.

And upon reflection, it is that little old lady who, for me, epitomizes the indomitable David versus Goliath spirit, resilience and fraternity that is and will always be Gibraltar.

**I sit back in the vastness of Spain, reminiscing about my short visit to the Rock**

**INTERESTING GIB FACT**

**1:** The opening scene of James Bond film *The Living Daylights* was filmed in an old WWII shelter under the Rock. A taxi driver's tale claims it is a submarine base, as it is in the film, but unfortunately it is less glamorous.



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**GIB: Something to write home about**



# The cream of the QROPS

Many expats move to Spain and cut most of their links to the UK, but are frequently tied to the UK tax system by keeping their pension there.

Yet it is easy to rectify. Since 2006, UK rules have allowed UK expatriates to transfer their pension scheme overseas under QROPS legislation. What's more, it could help to avoid a potential tax charge of up to 82%.

## What is QROPS?

Simply put, a **Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme**, or QROPS, is an overseas pension scheme into which UK pension rights can be transferred.

People with UK pensions who are, or will become, non-resident in the UK for tax purposes can move their pension benefits out of the UK to a QROPS.

## QROPS advantages

A QROPS can offer significant taxation and investment advantages, allowing many UK pension holders to get more out of their pension. It provides:

**I greater control** over where a pension fund is invested

**I tax efficiency** - it can substantially reduce the tax that would have to be paid when accessing a pension

**I flexibility** - there is no need to buy an annuity

**I inheritance benefits** - the pension pot can be passed on to the beneficiaries upon death and avoid a potential UK tax charge of up to 82%

**I simplicity** - numerous pensions can be consolidated in one QROPS.

The scheme must meet certain criteria set out by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and act as if it were a UK scheme for QROPS members who have been resident in the UK at any time in the previous five tax years.

If you have emigrated from the UK or you are about to do so, and you have transferable pension assets in the UK, then you may be eligible to use a QROPS.

## Where is QROPS available?

As long as a jurisdiction qualifies and the receiving scheme is recognised by HMRC then a transfer can

take place. The list of qualifying schemes is available on the HMRC website at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pensionschemes/qrops.pdf>

Because of the nature of the schemes, it is very important to be aware of what can and can't be done, as well as what may be pushing the boundaries, so that there is no chance of future repercussions.

## Why would a scheme not be on the HMRC list?

The overseas scheme must act like a UK scheme for at least five years or penalties may be imposed by HMRC on the transfer amount. There have been cases of jurisdictions in the past that have been removed from the list after breaking rules imposed under the QROPS regime.

For example, some jurisdictions have tried to pay out the whole fund and been stopped by HMRC; some are still offering this option and HMRC are looking at them in detail. It is HMRC's view that a pension scheme should be for the benefit of the member in retirement and 'trust-busting' (taking the whole of the pension scheme in one lump sum) goes against this ideal.

*"Living in Spain, I wanted to transfer my UK pension scheme. It was very important to me that I could see where my pension scheme would be administered and meet with the trustees face to face. I like STM because I can see them within a couple of hours to talk about my needs.*

*"My UK pension scheme included lots of different assets, not just cash. I also had a portfolio which I didn't want to liquidate. STM transferred all my assets, which went seamlessly because the investment company have a branch in Gibraltar."*

- L.R., Spain

## Your pension in safe hands

The QROPS rules are changing rapidly, so schemes have to stand the test of time and not just be a 'quick fix'.

David Erhardt, Director of Gibraltar-based STM Fidecs Pensions, explains the benefits of a well-

thought-out attitude to QROPS: "By taking a prudent approach, clients can make use of the many benefits that QROPS provide, without having to do something risky.

"As independent trustees and administrators, we offer advice to clients every step of the way without pressuring a sale. And because we are not investment managers, we are not tied to any insurance company or insurance product, and can accept assets such as commercial property and investment portfolios without them having to be cashed in."

Spain does not currently have a QROPS, so Gibraltar is the closest alternative and offers numerous benefits to UK expats living in Spain. It has the practical benefits of being English-speaking and in the same time zone as Spain. And having the scheme held in Gibraltar means it is easy to meet the trustees and administrators in person.

Taking out a QROPS in Gibraltar could be the final step towards severing the ties to the UK tax system.

*"Having worked in both the UK and Gibraltar, STM has helped me to consolidate all my pension pots into one place. It's helped save me time and money."*

- T.S., Gibraltar

## Find out more

For further information about QROPS, please contact:

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STM Fidecs Pension Trustees Ltd  
STM Fidecs Life, Health & Pensions Ltd  
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## Postage stamp size, Penny Black value

**F**OR a state the size of a postage stamp Gibraltar punches way above its weight in the financial stakes. While it only counts on a population of 29,000 people, spread over 6,800 kilometres squared, it has a GDP of over 900m euros a year, more than double that of a decade ago. Such is the strength of its economy, it is ranked as the fifth most stable in the world, by Jane's country risk rating.

*As a financial entity Gibraltar is one of the strongest in the world, punching well above its weight, writes Jon Clarke*

"The scale of Gibraltar's economic success makes it one of the most affluent communities in the world," insists Peter Caruana, the Chief Minister. The enclave is ranked the ninth most important country in the world for financial services and tenth for banking. "Gibraltar's economy has never been more prosperous, than it is today," says Dustin

Orfila, of the InvestGibraltar Office. "It is a buoyant jurisdiction, and indicators point to growth, despite the global downturn." Much of this is due to an influx of bookmakers and gaming companies, such as Bet and Win and Party Gaming, as well as stock market traders. "It isn't surprising when Gibraltar offers an English-style lifestyle, but with the perks of living beside the Med," says Aaron Edwards of Marex, an international trading firm.

"There are a lot of people looking to come out here to work from the UK and we have to vet them carefully." The reasons behind this is obvious with the generous taxation laws in place. "In April, high earners will be paying a top rate of 50 per cent income tax in the UK," says Ian Le Breton, of the Sovereign Group. "They could be losing up to 80 per cent of their income in tax. "Here, the amount of tax

### Why set up a business in Gib?

- ! It's an international business hub in financial services, e-commerce, shipping, property and tourism
- ! There is no VAT, there are few restrictions in moving capital and there is low corporate tax
- ! It has a highly regulated legal system with a stable political and economic environment
- ! There is a great range of corporate accommodation, plus workspace for manufacturing
- ! There is an international airport with scheduled flights to the UK and around Spain
- ! No shortage of bilingual and skilled workers
- ! With warm summers and mild winters - 300 days of sunshine - there is a high quality of life

they will pay is just 29,500 euros. It is a no brainer." It is this sort of tax break that has helped employment figures rise to around 21,000 people, with average earnings reaching over 25,000 euros in 2008. "There is no capital gains tax here, nor wealth tax," says Orfila. "We won't tax you if you sneeze." The once heavy reliance on the naval dockyards has shrunk from 60 per cent of

the local economy in 1984 to seven per cent today. Today, Gibraltar is a service-based economy dominated by financial services and tourism accounts for 24 per cent of the economy. Many British and international banks have operations based in Gibraltar. The Jyske Bank claims to be the oldest after acquiring Banco Galliano, which started trading in Gibraltar in 1855.

**INTERESTING GIB FACT 2:** ING Direct filmed an advert in Gibraltar because they believed the high street was the most authentically British they could find.



Special rate offers may also be available for certain customers from time to time.

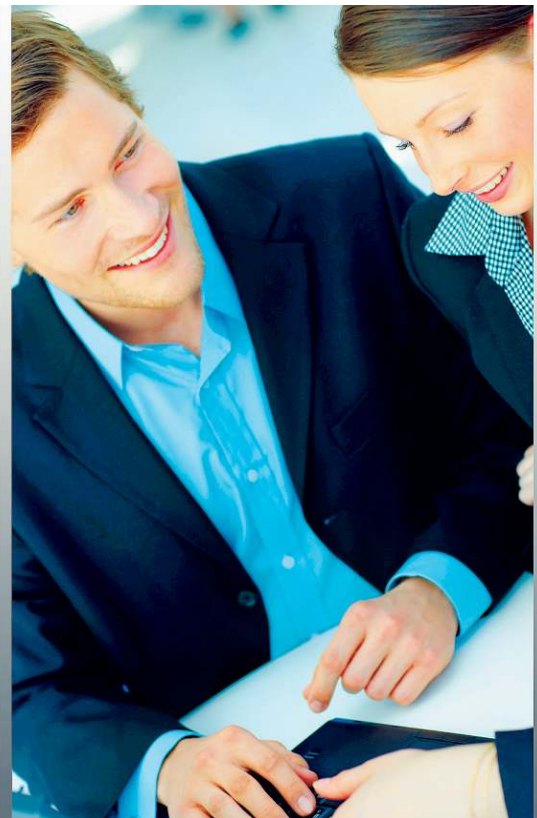
**PASSPORT.** Don't forget it. Gibraltar is British territory and passports are required by both British, Spanish and other nationalities to get through. You may not get asked but don't take that chance.

**POUND STERLING** is the Gibraltar currency and, although euros are accepted, be prepared for a poor exchange rate and your change in pounds. It's well worth getting some British money. Cash withdrawals are free with a British bank account.

**TRAFFIC ON A FRIDAY,** in particular, is very bad. From about 2pm there is deadlock in the city as commuters and visitors vie to leave and return home. The border checks are quick but they can only pass through so many cars at a time.

**MOTORBIKES** are everywhere in Gibraltar and when driving one should take extra care to check their wing mirrors for bikes coming on the outside.

**PARKING** can be very difficult inside the port and you may struggle to find somewhere for free. Also, make a note of where you are parked because Gibraltar can turn into a real maze if you get lost.



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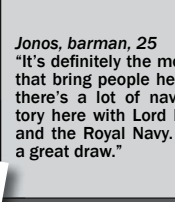
ING a stroll around Gibraltar's narrow lanes is a  
ic journey back through time. From the ancient castle  
- which sits on Arabic foundations and now serves  
e prison - to the historic belltower (right), which has  
hly original style, the enclave is alive with history.  
e it is staunchly patriotic with a distinct British  
ur (see alleyway left), it also feels very international.  
is obvious from its grand, Italianate buildings  
om right) and particularly in its stylish new marina,  
n Village (below).



## Why Gib is a top place to live?



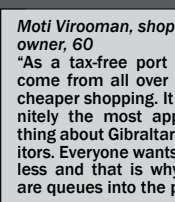
**Alona McIlhoney, moved to Gibraltar last week, 29**  
"It's a very relaxed and safe place and it feels like a real community. People like that kind of atmosphere. It's also a great base for the Costa del Sol and Andalucia in general."



**Jonos, barman, 25**  
"It's definitely the monkeys that bring people here, but there's a lot of naval history here with Lord Nelson and the Royal Navy. That's a great draw."



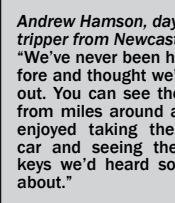
**Paul Vallejo, café owner, 31**  
"We've got lots to see here such as rare wildlife and trees, and you can also pot-hole and look at historical monuments... but for some reason the tourist board concentrate mostly on the monkeys."



**Moti Virooman, shop owner, 60**  
"As a tax-free port people come from all over for the cheaper shopping. It is definitely the most appealing thing about Gibraltar for visitors. Everyone wants to pay less and that is why there are queues into the port."



**Joseph Benrimoj, lifelong resident, 84**  
"It's very safe and friendly and has the feel of an English village. There are also excellent facilities for watersports and, of course, in the summer the weather is fabulous."



**Andrew Hamson, day tripper from Newcastle, 20**  
"We've never been here before and thought we'd try it out. You can see the Rock from miles around and we enjoyed taking the cable car and seeing the monkeys we'd heard so much about."

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**W**HILE the rest of Europe has seen a huge property crash over the last few years, the Rock has remained solid.

A combination of a shortage in property and an influx in high-earners - in particular from the online gaming industry - has seen the prices stand firm.

"Despite seeing a small dip in sales last year, things have bounced back well this year," says Justin Bray, of Bray Properties. "We have had a lot of sales enquiries although it has been hard to arrange viewings with the bad weather."

According to the property specialist, who is the sole agent for Taylor Woodrow in Gibraltar, the best buyers include Germans and Scandinavians, as well as the English. "The Irish have been decreasing in numbers and the Spanish have never really dipped their toes into Gibraltar."

Increasingly, he estimates, foreigners are looking to Gibraltar as a good investment.

"But there are a few people who have come for a day trip and simply fallen in love with the place," he says. Much of this has to do with the huge clean up Gibraltar has seen over the last decade.

"The influx of new money with the gaming companies and businesses relocating to the Rock has seen a demand for decent facilities," he explains.

"This has meant more cinemas, a

## Solid as a rock

*Gibraltar's property market is bucking the trend, writes Sam Dale*



**CAPTION:**

new leisure centre, an astro-turf football pitch, superb telecommunications, a new international airport, and casino just to name a few."

The pedestrianisation of much of the centre, in particular in Casemates Square, has also really helped to boost tourism.

"It has given visitors and locals alike a great, open square to sit

down, have a coffee and watch the world go by," he says.

But the influx of new money and the weakening of the pound has not however, pleased everyone.

With rising prices and the rental market staying buoyant, it has caused a crisis though for the local Gibraltarians, many who cannot afford to buy any more.

In the past residents would look for cheaper properties along the coast, but with the weakness of the pound they are now staying in Gib instead.

Lifelong resident Joseph Benrimoj, 84, said: "It's very difficult to find a place here at the moment."

"Luckily, I have been able to find somewhere for my daughter, who has disabilities, but it is tough."

In order to help residents buy homes, the Government introduced a three-year residency requirement, of which there are over 2000 homes.

With no capital gains tax Gibraltar will always be a magnet for speculators and, when combined with zero corporation tax, many businesses are keen to re-locate.

"Not all buyers come here because they fall in love with the Rock. Many come because the tax is so low," continues Bray.

"So there is always a danger it could become a tax haven which is why government schemes try to prevent that."

Although bank lending remains



**IN THE KNOW: Bray**

unusually high, with first time buyers still able to get mortgages at 90 per cent, the number able to qualify for loans has decreased.

**It has been very successful with 80 per cent of property sold on the first day**

This has given a further boost to the rental market as buying property has become more difficult.

The recent opening of the Ocean and Majestic Plazas in Ocean Village demonstrated Gibraltar's strength.

It has been very successful with 80 per cent of property sold on the first day and 98 per cent now sold.

A modern, stylish two bedroom flat in Tradewinds in the heart of Ocean Village goes for around 616,000 euros, while a mid-range property in an older block nearby is going for 251,000 euros.

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#### AGENDA

- 11:00am Registration
- 11:10am Welcome & Introduction
- 11:15am QROPS Demystified: The key benefits by Fiduciary Wealth
- 11:35am QROPS: The tax angle by Qualified Spanish Tax Advisers
- 11:40am Wills & Inheritance Tax Planning by DeCotta McKenna y Santafe
- 12:10pm Tax Deferral on Savings by Fiduciary Wealth
- 12:15pm Questions & Answers
- 12:20pm Finger Buffet & Refreshments

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## 20 Gibraltar special

Over 30m euros-worth of high tech yachts will be on display at the boat show in April, writes Sarah Drane



If you fancy being all-at-sea this summer, then the Gibraltar International Boat Show should be an early port of call. Taking place at the beginning of April, the Rock's swanky Ocean Village will be transformed into a showcase of shiny white yachts and a lot, lot more. Best of all, entrance is free making it a great day out for both the cash-rich and the cash-strapped. Now in its second year, the show has expanded into a new area, known as the Experience Zone, and will have a wide range of exhibitors from the premium yacht brands down to marine electronics.

# Nautical but nice

"While the spotlight undoubtedly falls on the yachts, we're also mindful that every visitor wants to participate," explains organiser John Wood.

This means introducing a climbing wall and rowing machines, as well as a golf showcase, tennis lessons and kayaks.

There will be seminars, fashion shows and live music, while children can have their faces painted and jump on bouncy castles.

One of the main highlights will be played out at high speeds across the nearby waters where up to 16 Thundercat race boats will be competing at speeds of over 50mph.

They will be piloted by the world's best from Ireland, Malta and, of course, the British team who are in training for the World Championships in South Africa.

On the business front, many of the world's leading yacht manufacturers are on-board to tempt you with their latest million-dollar babies. Sunseeker has once again

made a strong commitment to the Show. Their Costa del Sol dealership, headed up by Dominic Byrne, will be exhibiting nine yachts ranging from 34 to a sizeable 90 feet.

In total the Gibraltar International Boat Show is set to have over 20 million euros-worth of ready-to-buy boats – quite some display.

Nautical or not, Ocean Village, and indeed the rest of the Rock, is a more-than-worthy day trip destination. Here you will find a great range of restaurants from Pizza Express to KFC, and from Celebrity Wine Bar to the All Stars Sports Café.

The marina is full of fashion stores and other retail outlets and don't forget to pop into Gala Casino, which is one of the only casinos in Europe to have bingo, slot machines, poker tables and roulette all under one roof.

There is a great restaurant and this year alone there have been six 10,000 euro top prize win-



**MODERN:** Ocean village, and boat show (top)

ners in the bingo. Ocean Village is a ten minute walk from the border. Bring the car and follow signs for 'marinas' bearing right at the first roundabout after the runway. For further information on attending or exhibiting visit



**GET LISTED:** A Sunseeker

Gibraltar pays no VAT when buying a pleasure yacht so long as it remains within the port. Even non-EU owners can apply for permission to sail in EU waters for six months. To do all this you've got to fill out the forms with the Registry of Pleasure Yachts at [www.companieshouse.gi](http://www.companieshouse.gi).

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Ocean Village, Gibraltar

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### Join the register

GLORIOUS sunshine, a great base for the Mediterranean and spectacular views sailing round the Rock are a few reasons you might register your yacht in Gibraltar.

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# Marriage

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With the Mediterranean climate, English the spoken language and only a few hours flight from the UK, Gibraltar is becoming an increasingly popular venue for couples wanting to marry in the sun, allowing you to be married with no fuss and without the residency requirements of other countries.

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For more information on weddings in Gibraltar & Spain please contact Mediterranean Weddings:

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# A marriage made in the Med



**T**HE man who wrote romantic ballads *She Loves You, I Want to Hold Your Hand* and *Woman* for his wife Yoko Ono appropriately got married on the Rock.

John Lennon and Japanese wife Yoko Ono both said "I do" on the Rock in 1969, before famously spending a week in bed in Canada.

The couple managed to tie the knot in secret.

Since then there has been a steady stream of lovebirds taking advantage of the years of history, siege and intrigue, which has given Gibraltar its passionate spirit.

Each year hundreds of couples fly in from all over the world to get married or simply to renew their vows.

But Gibraltar's appeal as a romantic sojourn is not new. During the 1950s Hollywood stars Lawrence Harvey and Margaret Leighton were one of the first high-profile couples to marry on the rock.

Many other celebrities, including Sean Connery (twice) and Sir John Mills, followed in their footsteps.

But there are a few things that need sorting out in advance, if you wish to get married in Gib.

You will need, perhaps obviously, your passport, as well as your birth certificate, a document of non impediment, proving you are free to marry.

Due to its popularity it is also advisable to apply early for a suitable date at the Register Office in Gibraltar. The experienced consultants of International Marriage Services and wedding planners from Mediterranean Weddings can assist in the process.

"We can do everything from dealing with all legal requirements through to fulfilling your vision of a dream wedding," explains



**WED: John and Yoko**

Jeanette Obytz from Mediterranean Weddings. The company is an independent wedding coordinating service with years of experience in Gibraltar and southern Spain.

They work closely with Commissioner for Oaths Karl Grambow from International Marriage Services, who knows the legal system inside out to ensure a stress-free day.

And one of the main things to know is that you don't just have to get married at the Register Office.

You can now hold the service at the Alameda Botanical Gardens, with the Rock as a backdrop, as well as in the new marina, and even the Gala Casino.

"You might also follow the legal or church ceremony with the wedding reception at new and exciting venues in nearby Spain. Fresh ideas and exhilarating venues are popular and available only 20 minutes from Gibraltar," says Obytz.

"We can offer a brilliant wedding in the biggest ballroom or in an ancient open air Roman amphitheatre combined with the most elegant gala dinner surrounded by lush gardens, with fountains and antique pieces of artwork."

She can also sort out a range of haciendas and castles on Gibraltar's doorstep, as well as hotels nearby in Tarifa.

"There are so many reasons to get married down here, but just make sure you get the best people to help you," she concludes.



**HIPSTERS: Harvey and Leighton got spliced in Gib in the 1950s**



## WHERE TO STAY

### Jazz, beaches and history

THE visitor to Gibraltar is spoilt for choice when it comes to top-quality accommodation. Of the myriad options available, however, three particularly stand out. Set in a tranquil leafy square in the heart

By Dale Nottingham

of the Old Town, the O'Callaghan Elliot Hotel, with genial General Manager Mary Kinch at the helm, combines a prime

downtown location, just off Main Street, with some of the finest rooms on the enclave. Worth a special mention is the live jazz on Thursday nights in the Veranda bar – not to be missed. Another chestnut is the Caleta Hotel – Gibraltar's biggest – which is built on the rocks on the eastern side of the Rock. With private access to a sandy beach that overlooks both the Spanish and North African coastlines, the Caleta Hotel is the perfect holiday getaway. The hotel's Italian restaurant is also reputed to be one of the best on the peninsula. Last, but not least is the Rock Hotel. Built by the Marquis of Bute in 1932, it has long enjoyed legendary status and is a sumptuous throw-back to colonial days. It sits in nine acres of landscaped gardens.

## WHERE TO EAT

Gibraltar – multi-ethnic melting pot that it is – has every type of food imaginable, and much of it of a very high quality. A special mention must go to the outstanding Waterfront Restaurant. Under the stewardship of Tim Turner, this not-so-little gem combines a great setting – down on the marina – with some of the best seafood on the Rock. I can personally vouch for the succulence of the Vietnamese sea-bass. Elsewhere, Cafe Rofo, in Irish Town, has garnered a host of glowing recommendations for the quality of its food and service, while the Boatyard Restaurant on Queensway Quay regularly earns rave reviews for its food, service and atmosphere. And while taking a break from the endless Gibraltar shopping spree you're on, why not sample the delights of Cafe Solo in Casemates Square, with its friendly service and quintessentially Gibraltarian atmosphere.



- 01 Baby Zone
- 02 Bray Properties Ltd
- 03 Cafe Solo
- 04 Cannon Bar
- 05 Carols Bookshop
- 06 Casino
- 07 European Financial Planning Group
- 08 Fiduciary group
- 09 Gibraltar Boat Show

- 10 Med Weddings
- 11 IMS Weddings
- 12 O'Callaghans/Elliott Hotel
- 13 Rolex
- 14 Sacarellos
- 15 STM Fidecs
- 16 Sunseeker
- 17 Gache Opticians
- 18 Waterfront Rest

# IMS

## International Marriage Services

Did you know that it is possible to enter into marriage in Gibraltar without problems within 24 hours? This is made possible through a Governor's Special Licence which pre-empts the usual residency requirements. The marriage certificates are valid anywhere in the world once they have been issued with an international certification (Apostille).

Why not join the many celebrities- John Lennon, Sean Connery, and Frederick Forsythe to name but a few - who chose THE ROCK...

The procedure is straightforward and the costs are far less than one might expect...

Your wedding day will be one of the most important days in your life. Let the professionals at International Marriage Services make sure it's a day you will always remember.

*A marriage made in the Mediterranean...*



Karl Grambow  
(Commissioner for Oaths)

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