

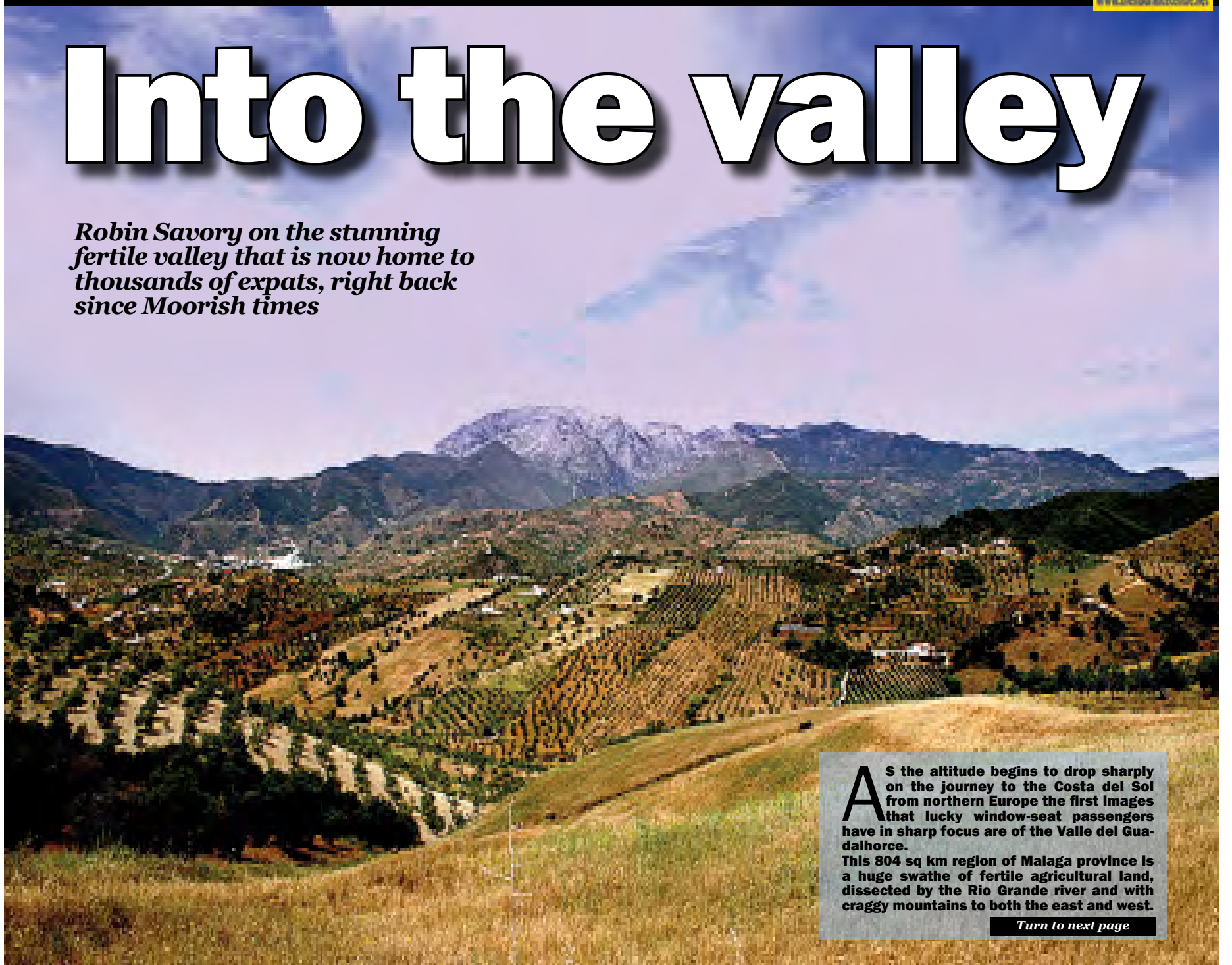
All about Guadalhorce Valley



Issue 160 May 1 2013

Into the valley

Robin Savory on the stunning fertile valley that is now home to thousands of expats, right back since Moorish times



As the altitude begins to drop sharply on the journey to the Costa del Sol from northern Europe the first images that lucky window-seat passengers have in sharp focus are of the Valle del Guadalhorce.

This 804 sq km region of Malaga province is a huge swathe of fertile agricultural land, dissected by the Rio Grande river and with craggy mountains to both the east and west.

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Guadalhorce Valley special

Guadalhorce Valley special



High life

from previous page

MAGICAL MONDA: Topped by a former Moorish castle

Criss-crossed with many other streams, as well as modern and ancient acequias, or man-made water channels, it is an area abundant with agriculture, indeed, one of the richest in Spain. Because much of the upper reaches are uninhabited, abundant and rare wildlife thrives in the forests and the hills. The region's principal towns lie in a line under the Sierra de Mijas, a long ridge of hills that are coming ever-closer to becoming a Natural park. These municipalities include Alhaurin de la Torre, Alhaurin el Grande, and Coiñ, the re-

gion's 'capital' and all are very popular with the British expat community living happily alongside their Spanish (and German) neighbours. This popularity is reflected in the availability of all-day bacon and egg breakfasts amid traditional tapas bars and well-priced menus del día, which are snapped up by all nationalities. In Alhaurin el Grande there is an English family that runs a near-equivalent to an English Post Office complete with all the British (and German) newspapers. Close by is an English butcher, a pet groom-



LOCAL DYNAMOS: From Papelería Cristina and The Wardrobe

ing business Posh Pets, run by former Crufts winners and a clothes shop the Wardrobe, where you can get a pedicure. "More and more foreigners seem to be moving here," explains John Gow, 42, from Northumberland, who runs the popular Papelería Cristina in the heart of town. "We can gauge it by our PO boxes. We got another 50 at the end of last year and they are already all taken. A lot seem to be



FROM BOYS TO MEN

EVERY boy wants to grow up to be a soldier and in Alhaurin el Grande it is no different. Here, a group of teenagers practise moves with their rifles in the hope of one day following in the footsteps of the Foreign Legion that marches through its streets at Easter time



BANTER: Expats and local Spanish gossip in central Coiñ

Scandinavians." Move inland a few kilometres up the main A357 past Cartama or up the charming A404, which eventually winds up to El Burgo and you will eventually arrive at the sometimes snowy peaks of the Sierra de las Nieves, a natural park and Unesco biosphere reserve. Up here in the hills, suddenly the cosmopolitan life on the coast seems very far away. Mercifully the area has no large scale 'plastic tent' farming as traditional methods still apply giving the landscape a tranquil feeling. On the western side and passing three 'Franco villages' there is a Malaga/Ronda railway line which takes in Pizarra and Alora on its way

towards Antequera and the world famous climbing area of the El Chorro Gorge. Halfway up the A357 there is a junction where the visitor

As each road winds its way up the valley the views keep getting better

tage status Rondellas festival and the largest collection of cactus plants in Spain, and then onto Alozaina and over the mountain passes to Ronda. Alternatively go straight on and the road climbs up towards the historic spa town of Carratraca and then the ancient settlement of Ardales which lies just below the lakes and rivers that feed the Guadalhorce river itself. Another side turning takes you past Pizarra along the valley towards Alora, past the imposing castle on top of a hill, and on to the El Chorro gorge by a different route. The scenery is spectacular in all directions. As each road winds its way up the valley, the views get better and better.



SPECTACULAR: The gorge at El Chorro



HISTORIC: The Arabic tower of Hurique near Alhaurin el Grande

and in many of the towns and villages there are thriving olive oil factories. The first drift of northern Europeans into the valley came in the 1960s and 1970s, but during the late 1990s and early this century there was a massive drift to buy the many fincas and cortijos scattered around. Now many enterprising expats make a living alongside their Spanish neighbours, whether it is a safari ride in a Land Rover or a quad bike trail. For walkers there are experienced guides who will take

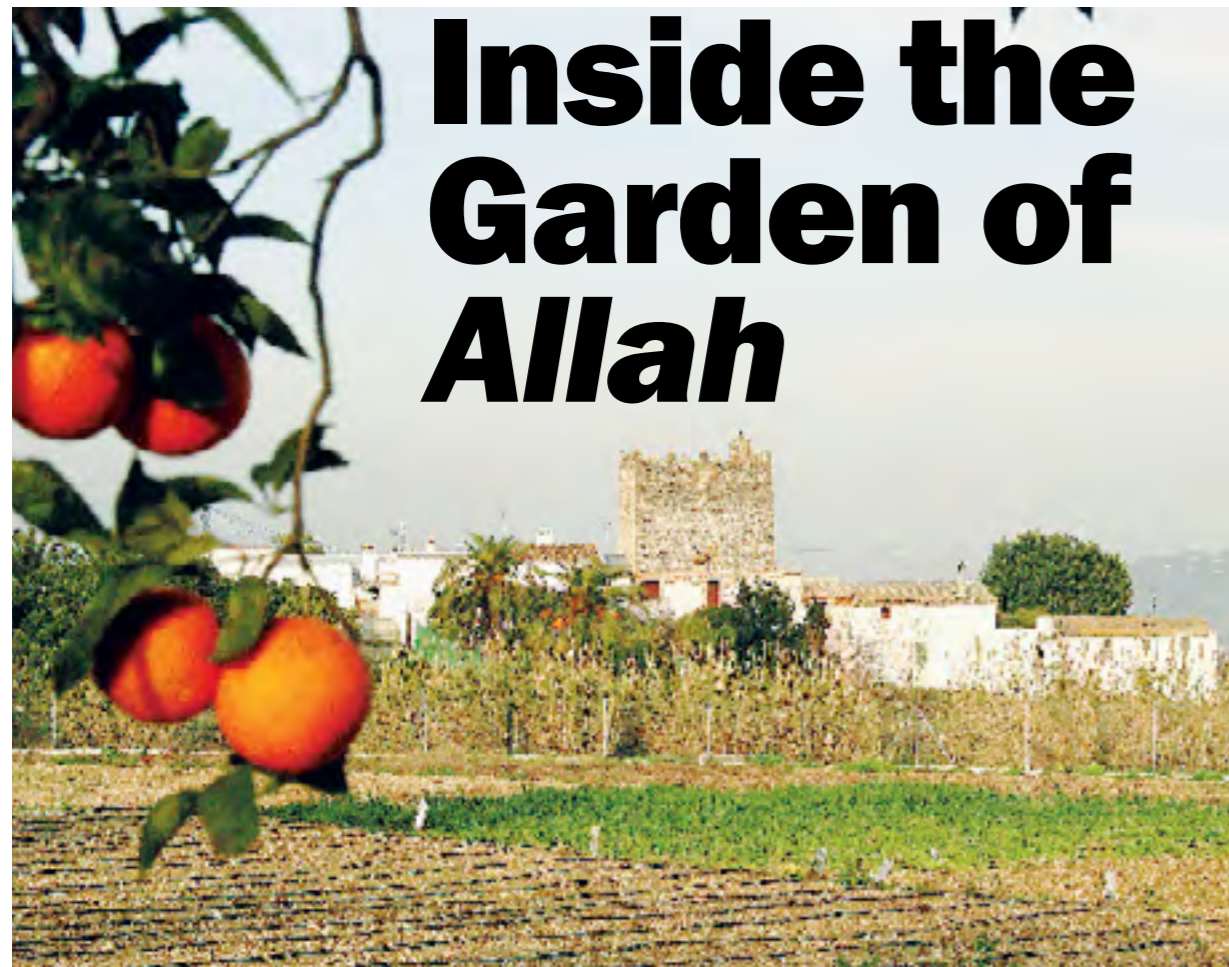
small parties into the hills along centuries old mule tracks, or there are horses to hire by the hour or by the day.

The best of the inland golf courses is Lauro, a gem with wide open fairways

land golf courses, the best of these being Lauro golf, one of Andalucía's oldest and a gem with lovely views and wide open (and thankfully flat) fairways. Many organisations, such as the Royal British Legion and the U3A art group hold events in the valley and there is always something going on. Yes, perhaps it is time you left the beach on the Costa del Sol and came and explored this large and varied region where 10 per cent of Malaga province has its home. I am sure you won't be disappointed.

For those who seek other forms of leisure there are in-

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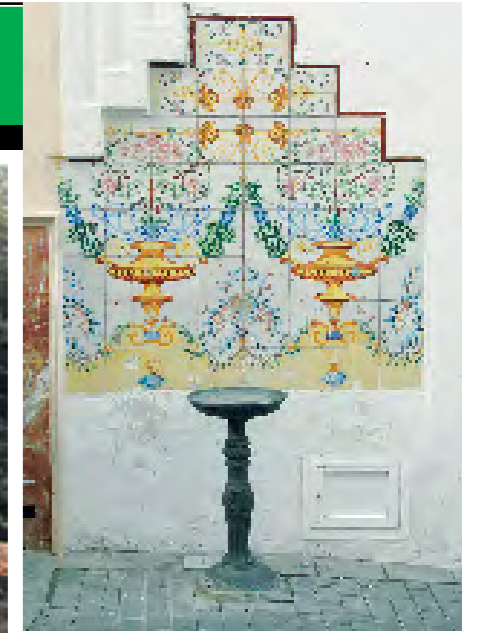
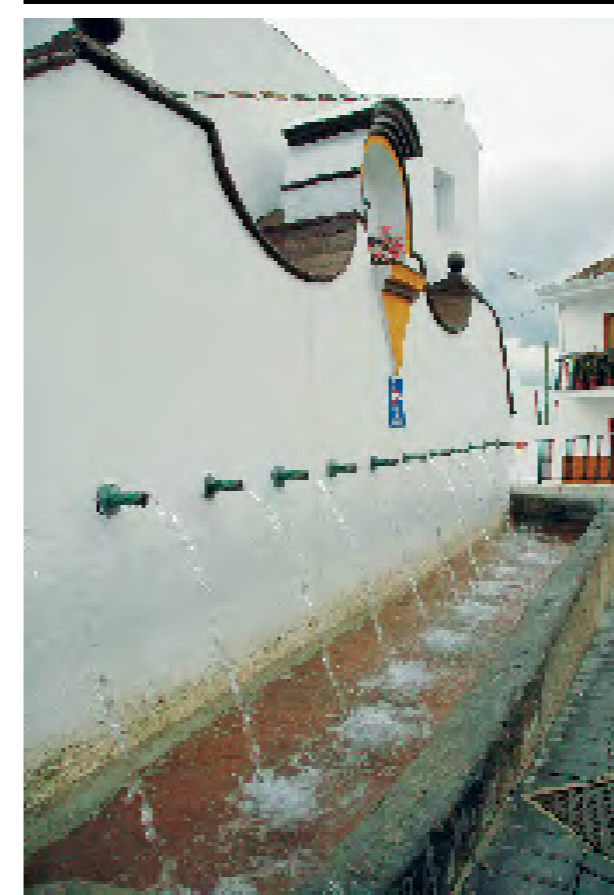


Inside the Garden of Allah



RELICS: Evidence of its agricultural past at Lauro Golf and (left) the Arabic Hurique fortress

There is no doubt that Alhaurin has been through a dramatic transformation over recent years. Wandering around the old town there is a new swagger about the place, despite the high unemployment that is affecting the whole of Andalucía. The streets are tidy and the old buildings have been generally well preserved. There is even a modern new library in the heart of the town. Don't be put off by its rather ugly outskirts. Head west from the roundabout on Calle Gerald Brenan and you are soon in the Albaicin barrio, which got its name due to similarities with the same district in Granada. Nearby, leafy Plaza Alta is abuzz with childrens voices and roadside cafes ply their trade late into the evening, while further up the ancient Vera Cruz chapel sits alongside one of the best 180 degree views in inland Malaga. From here you can see why, while nearby Coin might be the official capital of the Valle de Guadalhorce, Alhaurin has always been the real nerve centre. The views stretch for miles around, down towards Malaga airport and up into the Sierra de las Nieves mountains.



VISTAS: The view from Finca Sonrisa and (left and right) local fountains and (bottom) church square

for the past is to take a walk out into the countryside, in particular to the area known as Hurique, on the back road to Coin. Parking your car at the charming hotel Finca la Mota, where you can get a great lunch, you walk down into a lovely valley full of mixed agriculture. Alongside charming white-walled ruins sit small farmsteads of orange and lemon groves, orchards of plums and peaches, and herds of goats and sheep roam around.

In the middle distance, seen from miles around, is the imposing 12th century Arabic fortress of Hurique, which is well preserved and mirrors a similar fortress, called Ortigara, near Ronda. Keep on going and you will eventually come to the even more beautiful open space of Barranco Blanco, where the famous Timotei advert was once filmed underneath its waterfall. One of the last towns to be conquered by the Catholic kings in 1485, it was eventually merged with Alora, Cartama and Coin in 1666 to form a single entity known as the Four Towns.

But it was anything but plain sailing for the united municipality and there were epidemics of plague and even an earthquake in 1680. Later, Alhaurin was occupied for four years by the French during the Peninsular War in the early 19th century, which led to inevitable destruction and upheaval. Since then, apart from the turbulent period during the civil war, the biggest threat to civil peace was a small smattering of English hooligans over the last decade.

And then there was Scott Harrison, the former world champion boxer, from Glasgow, who made his home in the area a few years ago, but proceeded to live up to his hell-raiser reputation during a series of drunken nights out in the town. After one particularly messy night out he ended up punching a policeman, after getting arrested for stealing a car in the early hours of the morning. He ended up in nearby Alhaurin de la Torre prison. Fortunately there have been a number of more salubrious celebrities who have come to settle in the town.

These include Status Quo's Rick Parfitt, who lives with his wife and kids near the town, while Claire King from Emmerdale Farm is a regular visitor, as is Neneh Cherry, who has been a few times on holiday. It has even been said that Coronation Street's Bet Lynch has a place in the area, having been spotted shopping in Mercadona a couple of times. The town however, should perhaps best be remembered for its connections to Gerald Brennan, the celebrated writer of numerous books in southern Spain, such as *South from Granada* and *The Spanish Labyrinth*. The writer lived in the town for two decades and described it as his *Garden of Eden*. And quite right too.



At 240 metres above sea level the town sits in a commanding position between the 1,100 metre tall Sierra de Mijas and the fertile valley below, where everything from olives to avocados have been grown for centuries. Indeed it was in Phoenician times that Alhaurin became a market town, as the already established Iberian tribes bartered their goods with the new arrivals from the Lebanon. Later the town thrived under Roman occupation when a number of wealthy merchants from nearby Malaga made money from the rich mineral deposits in the nearby hills. They built sizeable villas, such as Villa de la Mata, and labelled the town Lauro Nova. Evidence has been found in the numbers of coins, statues and pillars, a trio of which stand pride of place opposite

the town hall today. But it wasn't until Moorish times that the town really blossomed, as the Arabs planted new crops in the wide fertile valley that is crossed by two rivers, the Fahala and Blas Gonzales. They introduced acequias (or water courses) to irrigate the entire valley and built a number of important mills, such as the Molino Morisco de los Corchos. An area of particular beauty – not to mention an extremely clement climate – it had soon taken on an appropriate new name, that of *Garden of Allah*, or Alhaurin. Remnants of the eight centuries of Arabic rule can still be found, particularly at the Arco del Cobertizo, which was a gateway to the medina, that had a souk, specialising, among other products, in silk. But the best way to get a feel

It has even been said that Coronation Street's Bet Lynch has a place in the area



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Captain Cook, the Moors and Eldorado

How the great, the good and, quite frankly, some not-so-good have spent some time in Coin, writes Jon Clarke

It has been well over a decade since *Eldorado* slunk from the TV screens with a whimper and an *hasta luego*. While there have been stories of its return over the last year, it still remains the biggest soap opera flop in British TV history. Ham-strung with problems from the start, the show suffered from poor casting, bad storylines and cringing performances by actors, many of whom didn't even know what a read-through was. Indeed, the only thing producers had no shortage of was sunshine, with the set appropriately built in the hills above the Costa del Sol. It is still there today - in Coin - and despite the show having re-couped its investment many times over due largely to re-runs, it stands as a sad

(and to be fair, rather tacky) reminder of the BBC's failure to replicate on screen the life on the Spanish costas. Either way, few people in Coin like to be associated with the show or believe it has any relation to their lives today. "It is a complete coincidence that the programme was set here," explains one local estate agent. "It was based on an urbanisation around Nerja that had become quite well known in the UK at the time. "It was about an English ghetto and nothing like Coin which is a real Spanish town, where most foreigners try to integrate and learn the language and those who don't mostly don't get on and end up leaving for the coast." Over 4000 foreigners are said to live in the mountain town of around 20,000 residents. The majority British



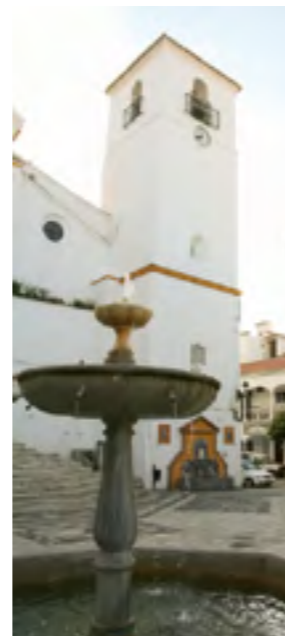
ANCIENT AND MODERN: Potted plants and quad bikes are seen on the streets of modern Coin

- but with a large number of Dutch and Germans - they enjoy the more relaxed country town living, while still having excellent connections for the airport and nearby Costa del Sol. A big town, it has the quality of life of a village and a very laid back feel. Best of all, it has a lovely average annual temperature of 15 degrees. Located in a fertile valley of the Rio Grande river, it has been known for its production of fruits, such as oranges, avocados and more recently pomegranates, since the Romans ruled Spain. Named *Lacibis*, it became an important market town and transition point for the minerals being quarried in the nearby Sierra Blanca. Marble from these quarries was used in the construction of the Roman town of *Italica*, or Roman Seville, and the mining of iron ore and marble continued into the 19th Century. During the time of the Visigoths, like many places in Andalucia, the town lost its lustre and largely fell into ruin until the Moors conquered the region and rebuilt it around 929AD. It went through something of a renaissance, thanks to the Arabs' clever use of water and love of gardens and planting. But their days were numbered and in 1485, after a long siege, the town finally fell to the Christian Crusaders from the north, who are said to have included Christopher

Columbus among their troop. But the Moors legacy of planting and gardens was thankfully respected, a factor that was clearly noted by celebrated British explorer Captain Cook when he visited the town, along with *Cartama* and *Alhaurin* in 1829. Travelling with the Royal Navy, he was mightily impressed. "These villages", he wrote, "are on rising ground above the river and in beauty of situation and cultivation cannot be excelled. They afford a specimen of the whole country when possessed by the Moors, being surrounded by gardens with orange, lemon and palm trees and abounding in all the fine as well as the more common fruits." To this day an orange tree features on Coin's coat of arms and there is no doubt that the town still has a curious feel of being both bustling and rural in equal measures.

Unusual

While on one hand slick businessmen walk into the town hall armed with briefcases and clutching planning applications, it is not unusual to see a tractor or quad bike driving around its narrow lanes, and there are numerous farming implement businesses scattered around. And then, of course there is the La Trocha shopping centre on the way out of town towards Coin. An unusual round shape,



CALMING: Fountain in the main square

here you can find a decent range of local shops, as well as a cinema and even a branch of Irish department store *Dunnes*. Best of all, there is still a big Sunday market, which on its day is one of the best attended in Andalucia, with people sometimes queuing up all night to get a stall, it being so oversubscribed. Best plan come and stay a night in the valley and get up early on Sunday to see for yourselves.

A Great place to live

Insurance agent **Jacqueline Caplan** lists her top ten reasons to live in Coin

TWO decades ago if you asked someone what Coin was like, the reply would usually be 'don't go... nothing happens there. Well I am pleased to say that Coin is now well and truly on the map and is a very popular place to live and visit on holiday. Below are 10 facts that many people probably do not know about this charming town:

- There is a large football ground with many different teams from seniors to juniors all of whom play in leagues throughout Malaga and Andalucia during the football season and do very well
- Legend has it that Christopher Columbus was among the Christian troops who laid siege to the town during its final Moorish phase
- There is a new state-of-the-art Library called *Fernando de Hermosa y Santiago*. As well as many books, of course, there is a book club and they have now installed a free WiFi service
- Coin has TWO ferias. One in the month of May and one in the month of August. This consists of the day *Feria*



- *ria* where everyone goes to eat and drink and listen to the music and the night feria where they have the usual fair attractions.
- Day of the Orange in May is a popular day for folk in the Guadalhorce Valley, who all get together bringing along their citrus fruits and the main meal of the day that is handed out to locals is salads, pudding and boiling soup. All homemade and free for everyone to try.
- *Dia de la Cruz* sees a religious figure taken from one of the many churches in Coin and carried round the town. The streets are decorated and the best decorated street wins a cash prize. A very popular event with the local

Posh with a capital 'P'

WHEN it comes to pedigree they certainly take some beating. While established in *Alhaurin el Grande* since 2004, *Posh* Pets Spain has over 60 years of experience working with pedigree dogs. Founder *Rachel Goutorbe* (top left) has a long established history of showing, judging, breeding & gundog work. Indeed, her family kennels with the 'Upperwood Affix' are still among the top breeders and trainers of Setters and Pointers in the UK and export their famous bloodlines all over the world. So it is little surprise that *Posh* Pets can provide every possible thing you could want for your pet, whether it is a full groom or clipping service or teeth cleaning with a scrape and polish without sedation. The shop provides an array of pet accessories and products, as well as Pet ID tags that are engraved on site. The centre has also established itself as a popular training centre for groomers from around Europe, with recent students coming from Ireland, Switzerland,

England, Malta and Lithuania. The Boutique Dog Hotel and Cattery boasts excellent facilities for play and rest and it even comes with sun beds, paddling pools and toys. The cattery rooms have a full panoramic view at the bottom of the orchard away from any dogs complete with cat trees, toys, music (favourites include *Love Cats by the Cure*, *Best of the Stray Cats* and anything by *Atomic Kitten*) and for the occasional chilly evening the cats are provided with radiators. Pet transportation has also become a major service with the company now relocating pets all around Europe to their new homes. It is fully licensed with a bespoke service in beautiful, correctly customised vehicles. This is a 'Pet Only' travel service for peace of mind where all pets are given plenty of individual space and comfort during travel; and the vehicles have been fully inspected and approved by DEFRA. For more information on all the service kindly visit www.poshpetspain.com



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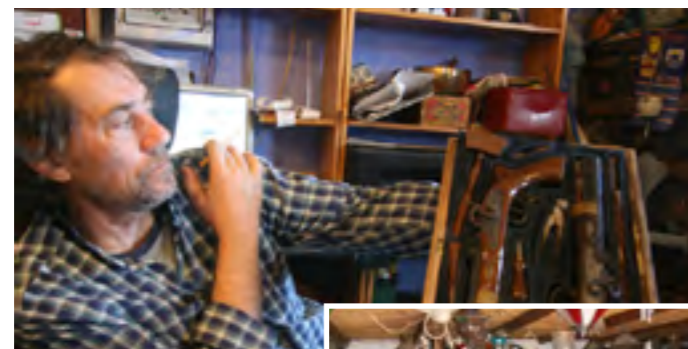
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Battle for variety

Dueling pistols, antiques and sustainable furniture from the Far East... welcome to Muebles del Mundo

There are few places in the world where Ramon and his wife Yolanda haven't visited. And this is immediately obvious stepping into his Aladdin's Cave of a shop in Coin. Wardrobes from India, fabrics from Thailand, clothes from Indonesia, boxes from Mongolia and lamps from Morocco. There is even a wonderful set of dueling pistols, most likely to have come from England, at some point in the 18th century. "They are worth at least €5000 and are incredibly rare," explains Ramon, who heralds from Valladolid and ran an antique shop in Madrid before settling in Coin a decade ago. His amazing cornucopia of collectibles - now having a 50% sale - has grown organically and spreads out over half a



RARE: Pistol set

hillside at the back of the unusual entrance that includes a 1960s Vespa. "And it definitely still works," he insists. "We have clients from all around the world and the other day I had 18 nationalities visit the shop."

Most of them are looking for that little something special. Something off-beat, different and original and, best of all, they can know that not only have Ramon and Yolanda chosen it themselves, but everything is created sustainably. "We don't buy plastic or anything from Sweden and we ensure that all the companies



TREASURES: Muebles del Mundo

we work with are sustainable wood suppliers and most plant two trees for every one they cut." Olive Press readers are being urged to take this pull out to the shop for a fabulous free gift of a chest of tea in an ornate holder, or an additional 10% off the already 50% off Spring sale.



Lighting up the skies

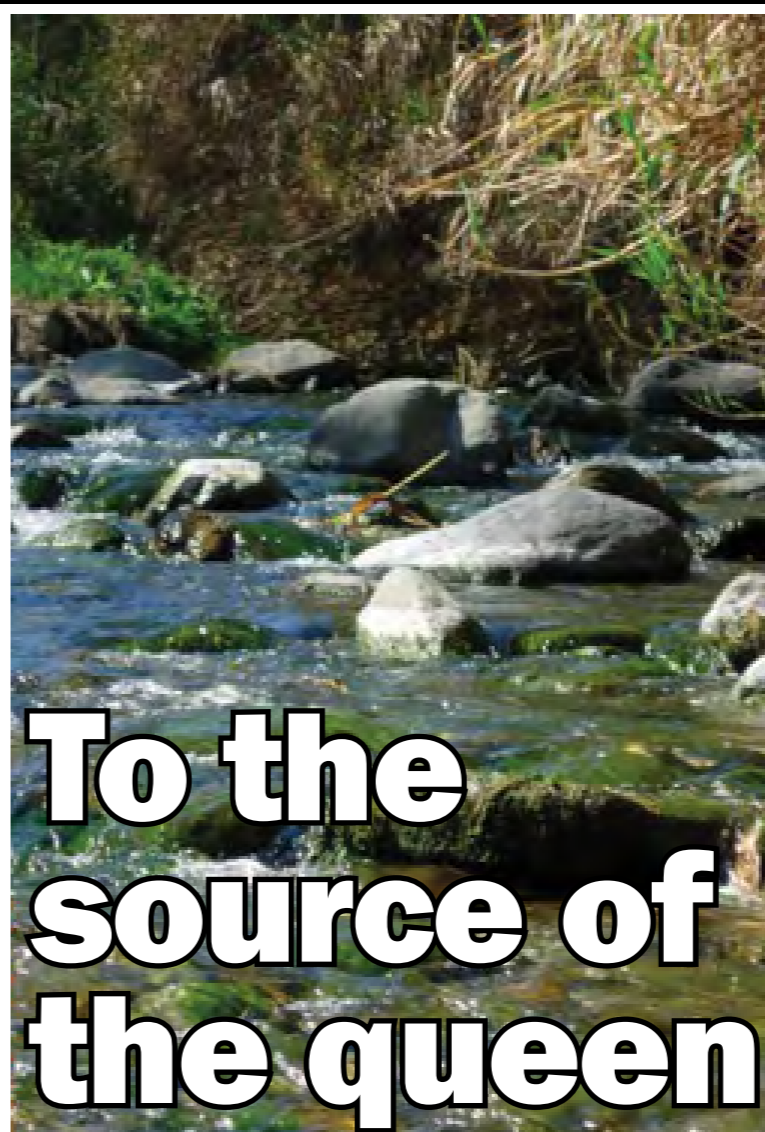
OF all the fiestas of the Guadalhorce region, the most spectacular by far must be the famous and dramatic procession of the Virgin of the Rondeles from the Hermitage of Veracruz to the Church of Santiago Apostol through Casarabonela's steep narrow village streets. The only lighting for this unique event held every December comes from the burning of the oil soaked esparto grass (or rondeles) which illuminate the passage for the team carrying the Virgin. In 2001 the procession was designated a fiesta of national tourist interest.

Ray Powell takes a road trip up to the source of the Rio Grande river stopping at a few nature spots along the way

It is one of Andalusia's biggest rivers and has been a major source of life for centuries. But few people know where the meandering Rio Grande river has its source. We'll take a drive up towards El Burgo on the A404 and look out for the sign for the tiny hamlet of Jorox. Nestling in the Sierra Prieta it is here that you will find this mighty river's source. Coming out of some limestone rocks near the hamlet, the river moves fast as it drops some 300 metres to a power station below. Before electricity came this short distance had seven water-mills, some for grain and some for olives and it also makes a wonderful start to our journey although on foot you will struggle to get far. To continue our journey we must retrace our steps by car back onto the main road en route for Alozaina and Tolox bridge.

Thundering through the gorge, this is always impressive, particularly in spring

Take this lovely road until you meet a bridge where the river is joined by the Rio Horcajos. The nearby Venta Ermita provides a handy car park and base while we follow our river back upstream on foot to where the river comes back into view after leaving Jorox. Starting from just above the bridge we come to a early hydroelectric power station. Now long disused it was fed by an elaborate system of stone-built canals and viaducts from the point where the valley flattens out. Take the track that is cut out of the sheer rock on our left and you will enter the gorge through which the river cuts. Thundering through this is always impressive, particularly in the springtime after the



To the source of the queen



SLEEPY: Jorox village where the mighty Rio Grande begins as a tiny stream

rains and snow melt. Head downhill from here for another five kilometres until you get to Venta Gallido, where you drive down through the car park to find the river yet again. Here in Spring, apart from the lovely smell of orange blossom, you will find a myriad of wild flowers including Tamarisk, Vipers Bugle and Bermuda buttercups. In the air egrets and herons fly past; the bridge takes us over the river to the fertile area known as the Hoya de Malaga. Continuing down to Coin, you reach a roundabout and a camino rural this takes us again into the Hoya de Malaga. It is a lovely lane and if you follow this for about five kilometres you get

to an ideal picnic spot and a vantage point for watching the many varieties of birds and fish in the river below. Follow this road through for another 15 km and we arrive back at Alozaina, a fitting end to our small trip seeing the upper reaches of this Queen of rivers.



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Frances Leate test drives a new yurt hotel near Alora

LYING back in a brightly coloured hammock I look out over the mountains of Alora. The smell of onions, garlic and fresh herbs is wafting through the air and the hot tub is just warming up. The setting sun creates a beautiful red glow all around and the gentle evening breeze seems to lift all the stresses of the last few weeks from my shoulders. Only an hour after arriving at

Alora Yurts I know I am in for a very relaxing stay. Run by a friendly laid back British couple Sara Easey and Darren Dickinson the hotel makes sure your every need is met. It is not just eating and sleeping in outdoor luxury. From make it or break it couples to workaholics in desperate need of a break, Sara and Darren have seen it all since they opened their new business. Doubling up as chefs, taxi drivers and even unofficial counsellors, the couple go that extra mile for their guests. Offering fine cuisine from around the world and authentic Mongolian yurts decked out with beautiful furniture and ornaments, the couple have transformed what was once simply a stunning location with beautiful views into a bohemian hideaway brimming with character and charm. I was soon being offered a range of local activities including quad-biking, horse riding, stone massage and trips into the nearby towns of Alora and Pizarra.



I took a trip to Alora which overlooks the breathtaking rock face of Mount Hacho on the banks of the Guadalhorce River. With an impressive castle dating back to Phoenician times and later renovated by the Romans then the Moors, this white washed town has a wealth of history ready to delve into. The quaint beauty spot offers tourists a taste of traditional Spain through its culture and cuisine. The local speciality, Sopa Porata - a garlic broth with croutons, scrambled eggs, spring onions and vegetables - comes highly recommended. For more information visit www.alorayurts.com



CAPTION: xxxxxxxxx

WHERE TO STAY

Put a smile on your face

WAKING up at Finca Sonrisa certainly puts a smile on your face.

This wonderful B&B - appropriately meaning Finca Smile - sits in an acre of lush mountain parkland high in the Sierra de Mijas above Alhaurin and has views to match. Run by the wonderfully warm host Joan, a Dutchwoman, who heralds from the Dutch Antilles, this is easily one of the most comfortable places to lay down your hat in Andalucía.

The rooms are extremely well appointed with everything you could need from kettles to microwaves and from bottles of water to sun cream. Expect to get plenty of local advice and tips from your



RUSTIC SURPRISE: Finca La Mota

host and her breakfasts are becoming legendary with travellers. Above all, staying up here in the hills gives the perfect impression of what the first

expat settlers to the valley would have found back in the 1960s and 1970s. Another amazing place to stay is at Finca La Mota, a 350 year old farmhouse in a

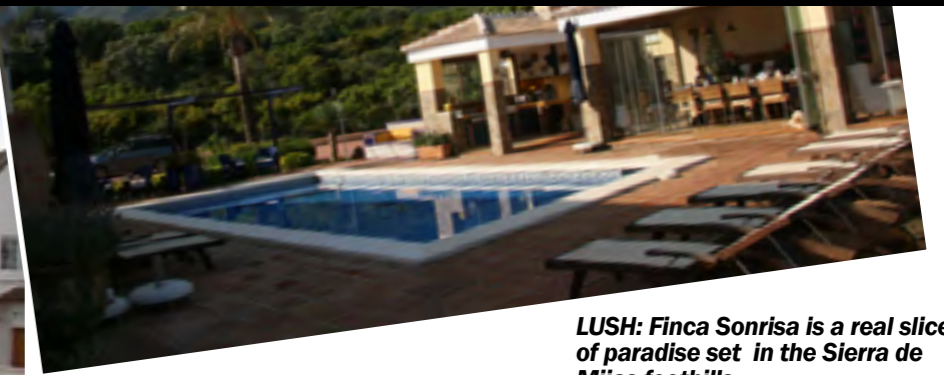


ROOM WITH A VIEW: Finca La Toronja in Coin sits at the top of the town

secret valley outside Alhaurin el Grande. Run by Dutch father and son Kees and Danny, it sits in a privileged spot with views around the valley. You enter into a classic patio Andaluz with a huge pool and its own terrace restaurant. Inside it is charming with comfortable rooms and a separate dining area. For a classic room with a view you should consider guesthouse Finca La Toronja, at the top of the town in Coin.

While Belgium-run, the Scandinavian-style B&B has castle-top views around the Guadalhorce valley and a lovely spacious garden and pool. You choose one of five or six rooms, each with its own distinct views and style. From here, you can easily walk down into Coin town or head off to explore the nearby valley. Another good option in the heart of Coin town centre is Hotel Albaicin, which has a

distinct style and swagger about it. Not your normal town hall lodgings this place has style and has been built with a good use of space and light. Owned by the family behind popular local venta La Cruz de Piedra, it is extremely good value, particularly if you take up the special night's offer for Olive Press readers with a four-course dinner, time in the spa at just €110 per couple.



LUSH: Finca Sonrisa is a real slice of paradise set in the Sierra de Mijas foothills

Finca La Toronja
A charming escape in the heart of the Guadalhorce Valley
Finca La Toronja B&B
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36 *Guadalhorce Valley* special

WHERE TO EAT

Creative cuisine

WITH an incredible range of local produce it is no surprise you can eat well in the Guadalhorce Valley.

The best restaurant for creative cuisine must be Santiago del Calvario, a charming spot, set up by an English couple in the heart of Alhaurin el Grande.

Now well established as Number One on *Trip Advisor*, it has a good range of dishes with both oriental and northern European slant.

You dine either in the lovely patio at the back or the candlelit restaurant, which is seductively decorated with dark hues and Moroccan lamps. Nearby, on a more traditionally Spanish tip, yet equally rated is La Higuera, a popular family-run restaurant on the edge of town.

Very Spanish, it has a good varied menu, with a particularly excellent Galician-style octopus served with Paprika. If it is fish you are after then

one of the best seafood restaurants in the province sits in the heart of town.

Casa Paco attracts diners from far and wide and understandably so, with not just an amazing range of fresh fish and sea food, but for a stylish interior.

The hot *conchas finas* were incredible, while the razor shells were as fresh as could be and the grilled langoustines unforgettable.

Over in Coin, you must look out the adventurous and highly romantic, Bohemia restaurant in the centre of town. The owner Pedro Trillo has incredible talent both for his interior design, food and original tapestries which line the walls.

If it's oriental you fancy, then you will be hard pressed to get a better Indian than at the recently-opened Taj Mahal.

But, as well as a full Indian menu you can also get some Mexican dishes and even a good range of pizzas. Finally hunt out the classic country venta La Cruz de Piedra, which sits on a hillside above the town.

This lovely old spot has great grilled meats on weekends and a superb *menu del dia* for the rest of the week.

Last but not least head over to La Risa, at Lauro golf,



AUTHENTIC: La Cruz de Piedra (above) and Bohemia (below) are classic Spanish eateries



where Janice Byron has carved out a classic hive for visitors as far and wide as the

coast and around the valley. Now 6 years after she took over the place as a shell and

Wonderful selection of fresh fish served everyday, such as pescado a la sal, shell fish, and rodaballo

Ctra. de Malaga 79, Local 1 Alhaurin el Grande

TAJ MAHAL

INDIAN RESTAURANTE

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Map of valley