

Total con

DEAR OP,
Having unfortunately dealt with Jeremy and his One Way Van Hire company, I can honestly say this man couldn't tell the truth to save himself. I had a van booked for seven days - which then became five - as he said he had a problem with the van. I later found out that the previous hire had run over by two days. I asked for a refund for the lost days which he refused. As I had a ferry booked to the UK I had no choice but to go with it. He said my deposit would be paid back after a month but after four months sending emails and numerous phone calls, I decided I'd had enough. On a trip back to Spain I paid him a visit. Even then, I got more lies before he eventually paid the money into my account.

Ian Smith, Glasgow

Silence hurts

THIS is extremely disturbing news for the victims and for innocent children today ('Sex abuse priests let off', issue 207). These accused men go free because of a technicality in the archaic predator-friendly laws. Child predators need to be kept far away from children forever. Let's hope that anyone who may have knowledge or may have been harmed by

Loving La Linea

MY husband and I are Kiwis visiting Spain, having sailed here on our yacht. We are big fans of *the Olive Press* and look forward to each edition. What great, interesting reading - even better that it is free - thank you. Returning from a quick trip back to NZ we feel compelled to congratulate the people of La Linea for making the waterfront so attractive and interactive. When we left work was still underway. Now, with the surrounding buildings being painted and spruced up, it is an area for locals to feel proud of. People are also pitching in by picking



up 'doggy doos' and binning their rubbish. The Alcaidesa Marina is world-class and a wonderful place to be based, its staff friendly and helpful as we have found most Spanish people to be. To wake up with the Rock in all its many moods and its taste of the UK

just a stones-throw away is another positive. It will be with some regret that we leave this beautiful place.

Kathy and Peter Jamieson, Christchurch, New Zealand

Mine of info

NICE article Jack! ('Did gold-greedy Romans kick-off climate change in Spain?' Issue 207). I am an anthropologist and teach an undergraduate course in Human Ecology at the University of Louisiana, and I have been using the case study of Las Medulas for years. It provides an excellent example of how human activity has been impacting the environment over the past millennia. This is precisely why we need to preserve Las Medulas as a UNESCO World Heritage Site - in order to preserve the evidence of human hubris and atrocities.

Daniel Cring, USA

Fingers crossed

IT is terrible to see how jealous and spiteful Spain is towards Gibraltar (For fags sake! issue 207) but it only mirrors what is a very jealous and spiteful government who, with such enormous problems to overcome, are still worried about a little land mass. Let us hope the current government is ousted and we get someone who will engage in a proper dialogue for the benefit of both Spain and Gibraltar. The EU will be taking note and it will only further undermine Spain.

Fred Crane, OP online

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any of these accused clerics will find the courage to come forward and contact law enforcement, no matter how long ago it happened. Silence only hurts, and by speaking up there is a chance for healing, exposing the truth, and therefore protecting others.

Judy Jones, Mijas

Monkey business

I ENJOYED the clever article in which Tom Powell as-

sumed the role of a Barbary Ape ('King of the swingers', issue 207). It was an entertaining and interesting viewpoint that contains possibilities for further development... seriously. 'Tales from their forefathers' could yield an interesting historical perspective. Go for it Tom!

Cedric Watkins, Australia

No surprise

IT is awful to read that Spain will close Gibraltar's Cervantes Institute, (Talking

Bill Phillips, Gibraltar

Gibberish, issue 207), but not shocking. There are plenty of people who don't speak Spanish in Gibraltar, not just the monks as Spain's foreign minister Margallo claimed. But he wouldn't know that as he's never bothered to visit. One thing is clear, even our monkeys have no wish to be Spanish. What Margallo doesn't know is that there are many monkeys in Spain who actually do speak Spanish.

Bill Phillips, Gibraltar

My holiday is too short ... to spend time on reading all the small print !

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Life sentence

THIS British expat had other choices than simply punching the German man to death (British man arrested for murder of alleged German paedophile in Sotogrande). This is not the 11th century we are living in! Now his children will have lovely childhood memories of visiting daddy in prison for the rest of his life as in Spain, there are no grey areas when it comes to murder.

Matthew Gordon, Benalmadena

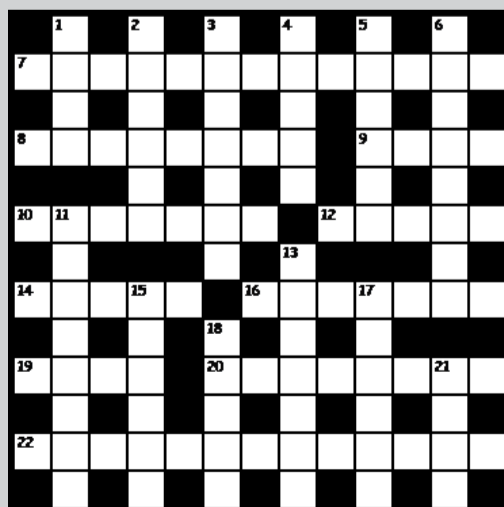


Red mist

SANDRO Rottman was apparently given numerous warnings to stop filming his daughter. But he kept persisting, persisting, and persisting. As you can see the father of the daughter reached the end of his tether when he found the images on this man's tablet, and his patience snapped. It's easy to say he should have controlled himself, but you do not know how you would react until it is your daughter being filmed.

Jay Green, OP online

Letters should be emailed to letters@theolivepress.es. The writer's name and address should be provided. Opinions are not necessarily those of the Editor.



CROSSMOT 52

Across
7 Inventors (3, 10) * 8 Fijado (8) * 9 Envidia (4) * 10 Aprendido (7) * 12 Metro (5) * 14 Oferta (5) * 16 Cubos (7) * 19 To Pray (4) * 20 Annoyed (8) * 22 Coating (13).

Down
1 Jewel (4) * 2 Amargo (6) * 3 Advances (7) * 4 Joined (5) * 5 Rocket (6) * 6 Más Pesado (8) * 11 Cumplir (8) * 13 Supresses (7) * 15 Ha ganado (6) * 17 Gatito (6) * 18 Nacimiento (5) * 21 Fecha (4).

All about Manilva, Sabinillas and Puerto de la Duquesa

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March 5th - March 18th 2015



Photo by: Jon Clarke

OUT OF THIS WORLD: Alien encounter with squids drying on a line at Punta Chullera, while (top right) a more conventional view from Duquesa beach

End of the line

The Romans did a lot for Manilva, famous for its sweet Moscatel wine and Gentlemen's Relish. Now tourists are seriously rediscovering the Costa del Sol's swinging 'West End', as Tom Powell reports

THE beach was groin to groin with revellers, lit up by a multitude of brightly-coloured lights and throbbing to the sound of hot dance music. But this wasn't the epic party island of Ibiza, or even the jet set resort of Marbella, just down the road. It was little Sabinillas, Manilva's younger sibling, letting her hair down at the Full Moon party last summer. San Luis de Sabinillas, to give this up-and-coming coastal resort its full name, was just a small fishing village a decade

Turn to page 20

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All about **Manilva, Sabinillas and Puerto de la Duquesa**

Beach life



From Page 19

ago; or what the Spanish call a 'pedania' - a tiny nucleus population dependent on a bigger 'municipality' - in this case, Manilva, which keeps watch over her little sister from the hills above the coast road. Sabinillas has been around just as long as Manilva (Bronze Age artefacts have been found) but the Costa del Sol tourism boom has turned the tiny enclave into a new best-kept secret. 'Sabi' as the locals affectionately call the resort, remains vibrant year-round thanks to its supportive and outgoing expat community. That's despite being at the quieter, less-developed 'West End' of the Costa del Sol. It may be the last resort on this glitzy coast, but Sabi wears its community spirit on its sleeve more proudly than most others. And every June, the full moon provides an excuse for the mother of all-night beach festivals - one to rival all the others along the coast. With the night sky aflame with Chinese lanterns, thousands of people of all nationalities gather on this Blue Flag beach to dance, drink, dip their feet in the sea and dance some more. But what makes Sabinillas special is its year-round appeal - close enough to Marbella to benefit from its boom, but far

enough away to have carved out a positive alternate reputation for itself. The Manilva municipality as a whole, like everywhere else on the coast, has flourished under tourism in the last decade. But it's a working town as well as a tourist town (it still has a small fishing fleet) where Spanish people go about their daily lives, alongside 'los extranjeritos'. Expats John Love and Heather Williams have lived in the village for a decade. "Manilva is the perfect place to live. It has all the benefits of Marbella without all of the pretentiousness," says John. "It's the Costa del Sol's best kept secret but it is still near to everything," adds Heather. name for the strip where all the banks and insurance companies are centred while, down on the waterfront, there is a great range of bars and restaurants. British expat Debbie Porter moved to the area due to her husband Craig's job in Gibraltar six years ago. "We decided to try it out for a year or two... but we are still here four years later!" she explains. "There is a beautiful beach front, lots of tapas bars and a



CELEBRATED: The Blue Flag beach in Sabinillas (top) and a view from chiringuito Floria

busy little village centre with everything you would need. We quickly got to know both Spanish and English people and found everyone welcoming and friendly. "We love that there is a strong expat community for times when you feel a little home sick (and struggle with the language)." "This is also one of the nicest places to bring up a child. Kids are part of everyday life and we love spending a warm summer evening in the Plaza watching the world go by," she adds. For proof of this village's rapid growth, look no further than its weekly market. It began in 1990 as a car boot sale in the car park of the Moorhouse

Manilva - the best place to live on the Costa del Sol

IS it any wonder that foreigners from 78 countries make up 43% of Manilva's diverse population... when life is so darn good there. The lowest taxes on the coast, the lowest density of population and some of the best facilities; these are just some of the reasons mayor Diego Urieta believes expats choose to live in the town. "It is easily the best place to live on the Costa del Sol," he insists. "Aside from the fact that it is 30% cheaper to buy here than Estepona or Marbella, the environment is better. "We have great infrastructure and equipment and plenty of free events and services for the older generation," he adds. "We are just about to open another big sports centre in Sabinillas and the IBI housing tax rates are the lowest on the coast at 0.7%." In addition, those who enlist on the official town padron get a further 23% discount. "We really want to try and encourage the British to do this," explains Urieta, who has been working at the town hall for nearly a decade. "We believe that around 8,000 British people are living here, while only 2,800 are officially registered. If everyone was to register we would be able to get more money for roads and healthcare facilities. "We would even be able to get a national police station." A friendly chap, who is popular in the town, Urieta insists that



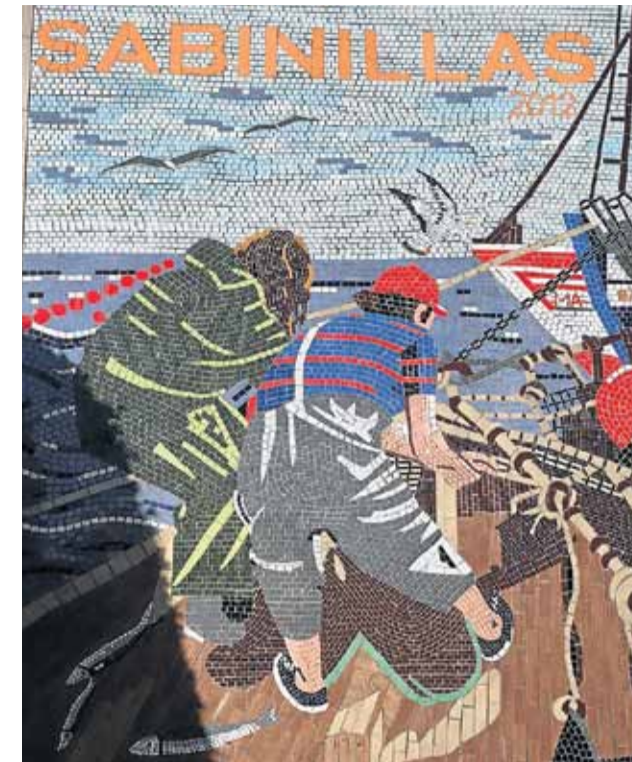
THE GOOD LIFE: Mayor Diego Urieta with Olive Press publisher Jon Clarke

'work and honour' are the pillars of his working life and he has been involved in politics since he joined the IU party in 1999 at the age of 22. Since the last mayor of Manilva Antonia Munoz, of the IU party, resigned in disgrace last year, he has insisted that he wants to clear up the pall of corruption that had tainted the town hall for years. "I have zero tolerance for the bad stuff that went on before," he says. Having now broken away from the IU party he is standing for an independent party in the local elections this year.



RICH TAPESTRY: Mosaics showing agricultural life in Manilva and sea-life in Sabinillas

pub. Today the Sunday morning Sabinillas market is known far and wide and is one of the biggest on the coast. It has had to change location three times simply to accommodate its expanding array of market stalls. For further proof that this place means business, take a stroll alongside the main coastal road on the side away from the beach, where the new Olive Press headquarters resides - look out for the bright olive green sign above the much-loved Sabinillas bookshop. Steve Davies, who has run the bookshop for four years so far, says: "Sabinillas is a great place to work and live, there's a real community atmosphere and it's great to have the same familiar faces popping in - and of course some new ones!" Back on its incredible Blue Flag beach which stretches all the way from Rio Manilva to Puerto Duquesa, fishermen still launch their boats and are often met by waiting restaurateurs upon their return, eagerly awaiting the day's catch. A charming walk along the prom leads to the buzzing Puerto de la Duquesa, where a multi-cultural melting pot of bars and restaurants frame a sleek yachting marina. Castillo de la Duquesa was once the site of a thriving fish processing industry, exporting highly-prized garum paste (a kind of Gentleman's Relish). Remains of the factory, a villa and bathhouse can still be seen today. The port remains the brightest jewel in Manilva's crown, benefiting from tourism and buzzing with life. Unlike any other port on the Costa del Sol, La Duquesa faces out to sea; you can see across the glittering Mediterranean to the horizon from every one of its three sides. The port has undergone a growth spurt in the last decade and the expansion doesn't look like slowing down anytime soon. A veritable hub of nationalities descend on the marina to meet friends, eat out or shop during the day. And on a Friday night in the summer, this hip little harbour is as hot a place to be seen in as Puerto Banus - without the cost and hype! Set back from the port in the mountain foothills, the com-



munity of Manilva is hugged by vineyards. Not being on most tourists' radar, it's refreshingly devoid of skyscraper construction. Visitors who venture off the main road to investigate the centre's labyrinth of narrow one-way streets where it's easy to get lost, even with GPS navigation. Buried in the historic heart is St Anne's church and the adjoining cemetery, dating from around 1776. Turn a corner and there it is, striking yet simplistic, bold yet unassuming. Sauntering through the maze of white houses with their terracotta roofs, every hola from passers-by strengthens the feeling that Manilva is still very

It offers vocational courses in wine-making, aimed at inspiring teens

Spanish. It is one step removed from the wave of tourism lapping its coast, but the quality - and price - of its tapas still draws the Sabinillas crowd. And then there are the post-card views from every direction. The Pedreta mirador delivers a view stretching from the white cubed village of Casares to the coastal hubs of Estepona and Marbella below. A network of tracks can be glimpsed in between, inviting you to hike, cycle or horse-ride. It is also quickly clear how important grapes and wine are to Manilva. The central Plaza de la Vendimia (Wine Harvest

square) is adorned with a spectacular mural depicting workers in vineyards, and becomes the centre of the action during the September harvest festival. The nearby Interpretation Centre, opened in 2010, highlights and strengthens the village's long wine-making tradition. It offers vocational courses in wine-making, aimed at inspiring the younger generations and training future professionals. But with the right blend of



MANILVA - HOME OF THE OLIVE PRESS

THE Olive Press is proud to call Manilva its home. Relocating to the well located Costa del Sol town three months ago, we have been treated well by the locals and seen business grow as a result. Based in a spacious self-contained office overlooking the busy N-340 motorway, we are just 25 minutes from Marbella and 25 minutes from Gibraltar. "It is a fantastic location, strategically for our growth and due to its friendly, down to earth locals," explained publisher Jon Clarke (pictured above with some of the team). The official launch last month was attended by mayor Diego Urieta and Driving Over Lemons writer Chris Stewart.

Advertorial

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WITH 12 years' experience of working with British expats in Sabinillas, Mateo Lawyers is equipped to handle everything from property conveyancing to Spanish wills. The full spectrum of legal services is covered from business matters to divorce, traffic accidents or inheritance issues. The firm also has offices in Sotogrande and Algeciras. Lawyer Juan Mateo Soler explains: "We specialise in helping British expats with all the proper paperwork for purchasing a property. "Our aim is to establish a personal relationship with our client so that we can provide tailored legal and tax advice to suit their particular needs." For further information or a no-obligation quote contact info@mateo-abogados.com or call 665 548 865

tourist expansion and Spanish tradition, it is easy to see why Manilva is becoming the toast of the coast for more than just its wine.



TIME TEAM: Roman oven

PS... DID YOU KNOW?

IN the heart of Manilva village, an archaeological team recently found the substantial remains of a Roman kiln dating back to 2AD. In excellent condition, it was found alongside a series of fragments of pottery. It is thought that the unique design may be the only existing example in Spain and could serve as further evidence of the town's key role in exporting 'garum', one of the most popular products during Roman times. Then known as 'saltum', Manilva became famous for the delicacy, a pungent paste made from fish guts. Exported via the Eternal City of Rome via boat, it needed to be stored in well-made pots, called amphoras. And it now seems likely that the recently discovered kiln may be where these were made on an almost industrial scale.



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22 **All about Manilva, Sabinillas and Puerto de la Duquesa**

Port of adventure

If the idea of travelling around the world in 80 restaurants floats your boat, bustling La Duquesa Port is the perfect spot to drop anchor. A walk around this white-washed marina takes scarcely longer than five minutes but just count the blackboards promoting cuisine from all over the globe: China, India, Japan, and Singapore, and a plethora of European ports of call too! In the maze of alleys behind the port you will also find the excellent Hemingways, its bustling Irish next-door-neighbour Kinsales, as well as Tim's fish and chips, Italian pizzerias and authentic Spanish eateries, packed together more tightly than wheels in the car-park. It could be argued that La Duquesa lacks Spanish identity, with more English voices than yachts and more burgers than tapas. But step out either side of the port, where Spanish *chiriguitos* (and boatfuls of grilling sardines in summer) fringe expansive soft sand beaches and you'll be left in no doubt which country you're in. This social meeting point sings through its restaurants, cafes and bars, the people who work in them and the visitors who sit in the sunshine enjoying them. This elegant enclave of turrets and towers, pretty plazas and



SPIRIT: La Duquesa port

La Duquesa is a culinary voyage of discovery, writes Tom Powell

steps leading to different levels juts out from the mainland, encircling its attractions like an oyster encloses a pearl. Quirky and eclectic, it's like a younger sister to Puerto Banus - less glam perhaps, but less snooty too; more affable and, importantly, very much more affordable. This sociable spirit is enhanced by the people who work here, who hail from all over the world and are woven into the ethnically diverse fabric of La Duquesa. It makes sense that one of the men heavily involved in the port's growth is Moroccan Zac Hauswirth. Last year he opened his fourth restaurant here - Casablanca, specialising in food from his homeland. He also runs the Ocean Café, where bartender Christian Lloso, who has lived in Spain since 2006, raves about her 'workplace'. "It's friendly, trendy and always busy, rain or shine. Because of the people the port is alive and rapidly growing." While Christian admits the av-

erage age of customers is over 30, that changes during busy weekend 'happy hours' which are popular with young and old alike. And of course, it's hip to 21st century requirements, with wifi freely available in all the cafes and every possible amenity a short distance away.

Market leader



ODDITIES: At the Sabinillas market

IT is said to be the best flea market on the coast. And hours can certainly disappear while perusing all the weird and wonderful oddities at the bustling Sabinillas Sunday market. The New Fairground on the Rio Manilva road is the latest home for the famous rastro, a colourful combination of flea market stalls and fresh produce. The market is always extremely busy with visitors coming from afar to bag a bargain. The recent appearance of bullfighter Javier Conde and his wife, flamenco star Estrella Morente, has only strengthened its reputation.



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SEA OF GRAPES: Hillside near Manilva

Raisin' the roof

Sweet home Manilva is famed for its wines

EVERY September Manilva celebrates its winemaking tradition with a three-day harvest festival. Think flamenco dancers, brass bands, music and dancing into the early hours in the Plaza de la Vendimia.

The sweet Moscatel grapes have been grown in the vast vineyards surrounding Manilva since the 16th century and are used to make the aptly named Manilva wine, famous throughout Spain. Manilva took up winemaking as its main economic activity after the Spanish Civil War because of its ideally-suited climate and soil. The festival was founded in the



Forgotten fortress

STANDING resolute on the coast to the west of Duquesa is the impressive 18th century castle of La Duquesa, in the middle of what was once a Roman fishing village. It is well worth strolling down the beach from Duquesa to visit this Roman fortress, which is one of Andalusia's biggest excavation projects. The surrounding town of Castillo feels somewhat forgotten; the old industrial area to the north of the castle is now a waste ground car park. But the castle and the array of seafood restaurants suggest it is not completely off the map yet. The castle was built in the 1760s to protect against continual incursions by pirates. It is incredibly solid and earned its builder, Francisco Paulino, a title and the honour of commanding a cavalry company. Today it is used by travelling museums and exhibitions, for workshops and as the town hall offices.

Follow the fairways

MANILVA is blessed with some of the best golf courses on the Costa del Sol. With fantastic opportunities to test your skills on championship courses, there are a number of fairways that will even prove a challenge to the lowest handicapped players. But fear not, Manilva is not just for the pros, as there are also a number of 'friendlier' courses to whet the appetite of the less experienced golfer. The best place to start is at Gaston Golf Tours, where they offer a number of discounted prices. The company - which has had offices on the Costa del Sol for more than 15 years - offers golfing holidays in Spain, Portugal or the Canaries and Balearics. For more information, search 'Gaston Golf Tours' on Facebook, email info@gastongolf.com or call 952 936 803.



early 1960s and has become a red letter day on the local calendar, drawing visitors from across the region to see the winemaking process. As well as making the sweet dessert wine, the muscatel grapes are also dried on the hillsides to make the famous 'Malaga raisins'. "We have seen a lot more people interested in buying the sweet wines over the last few years," explains local shopkeeper Maria Esteban, who sells the wine, plus numerous other local products, from her unmissable shop Frutas Pascal y Hijos, on the way into town. As well as nuts and pulses, there's a huge range of fruit, including locally-grown avocados and cherimoyas, which originate from the Andes and thrive in the protected coastal valleys here, fed by the rich sulphurous waters. The creamy texture of the flesh gives the fruit its secondary name, custard apple. Mark Twain called the cherimoya 'the most delicious fruit known to men'.



GRAPE EXPECTATIONS: Grape pickers at festival

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All about Manilva, Sabinillas and Puerto de la Duquesa

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FAMOUS FACE: UK Prime Minister Ted Heath visited Venta Madrona (Pictured below) in the 1970s



Venta that drew the crowds

FOR decades it was the stop off for artists, politicians and celebrities. So, it was something of a tragedy when Venta Madrona was knocked down due to the construction of an underpass through Sabinillas a decades ago.

One of the main stop-offs for travellers between Gibraltar and Malaga for centuries, the historic restaurant was always full and served up an excellent range of dishes.

"We had an amazing range of visitors, including Frank Sinatra, Ted Heath and former Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez," recalls the son of the former owner.

Now running his own wine and lottery shop nearby, Jose Antonio Madrona recalls the frequent visits from famous flamenco stars Valerin and Cameron, Spain's most famous flamenco star.

"He was often here as he was a friend of my uncle. He stayed the night and frequently sang. I remember even dancing for him as a child." The venta, which was built in 1929, also counted on the founder of Andalusian nationalism Blas Infante as a regular. "He had plenty of meetings here in the run up to the civil war," added Jose, who studied history at Malaga University, before studying viticulture.

The family now run the wine and lottery shop next to the roundabout, which at least prides itself on being a busy hub of the community - like Venta Madrona before it.



ON THE STREETS: Local families enjoy the laid-back nature of Manilva in the 1960s



MUSICAL TOWN: Girls singing while (right) famous flamenco star Cameron de la Isla rides on a bike in Manilva



PROUD: Jose Antonio Madrona holds a picture of frequent visitor dancer Antonio el Bailarin

Advertorial

Brit future for homes market

REAL estate is back in business on the Costa del Sol, say the property pros at Hamilton Homes.

The Sabinillas estate agents forecast that 2015 will be the year of the mortgage and the British property buyer - both scarcer than hens' teeth since the property bubble burst.

Plus, with the Manilva area offering what the company believes is the best price/quality ratio on the coast, it is expecting a busy year. Banks are keen to lend money again and the strong pound is likely to see the British market back in its number one slot, ahead of the French, German and Scandinavians who have been keeping sales ticking over, says director Andrew Bacarese Hamilton.

And with property prices 50 to 70% lower than they were at the height of the boom in 2007, now is a great time to buy. However, banks are cracking down on paperwork and purchasers will need expert help to cut through the extra red tape.

Working closely with financial institutions, the team at Hamilton Homes is in the perfect position to help buyers negotiate a hassle-free mortgage.

"The banks over-lent in the heyday of the market and we all suffered from their over-exuberance," says Andrew.

"Understandably they don't want to get back into that situation so, as a result, there's a lot of paperwork, a lot of regulation, and it can be overwhelming for people who haven't been through the system before."

Seeking the help of an expert has got to be worth it with the amazing local bargains around. Luxurious penthouse apartments at Finca Cortesin that originally sold for €500,000 are now changing hands for just €250,000.

Dream properties are flying off the shelves as they come on the market - think a three-bedroom townhouse in idyllic Casares for just €99,000, but don't think about it for too long! Analysing properties along the entire coast from Gibraltar to Malaga, Manilva is the zone which is currently offering the best price/quality ratio, says Andrew.

Here is his advice for new buyers:

Where to start
To buy a property the first thing you need is an NIE. This little number costs under €10 and once you have it, it's for life. Hamilton Homes can help set up your NIE appointment and guide you through the entire purchase process in a friendly, personal way.

Ideally, give them at least two to three weeks notice to set the appointment up before meeting them. You'll find your experience with Spanish bureaucracy can be dramatically easier.

Number crunching
Having worked for Citibank, Royal Bank of Scot-

land, Credit Agricole and Barclays between them, Andrew and his partner Shanalle know a thing or two about property financing.

Not only will they help you find the perfect place, they'll secure the perfect mortgage too. They set up their company in 2003, having identified a serious gap in the market for agents with strong financial backgrounds.

Together with you, they can analyse, plan and budget to make your purchasing experience free of fuss and unwanted costs down the line.

What you need to know
Your age (it affects the length of mortgage you are entitled to)
Your income (that's net income, minus any debts and existing loans) Your funds (how much you are willing to invest in the property).

Figuring it out
If you don't know the precise state of your finances, don't panic. It's far more common than people think. Clients are frequently unsure of what they can really afford. "That's what we're here for," says Andrew. "You don't have to come up with a magic figure yourself."

"Over a coffee or over the phone, we can go through your finances on a case-by-case basis, and work out the perfect place for you."

The financial analysis balances what you have with what you need, so you will only be shown properties you can afford.

This avoids disappointment and unrealistic expectations. Although in some cases, people discover they can afford more than they imagined!

Market forces
Despite the supply being there, the backlog means banks are inundated with sales and the process of buying in Spain is taking longer than normal.

If the entire process of securing a property with a mortgage used to take two months, Andrew estimates that now it can take as long as four. Prospective purchasers should be delighted, however, as the longer wait is a result of much-improved checks against money laundering and ensuring the market's foundations are solid.

Andrew believes the market has bottomed out. But, as Hamilton Homes has unprecedented access to properties that the banks are trying to sell, the deals now are better than ever.

High-quality homes are going for staggeringly-low prices, and 2015 looks to be a great year for Spain's property market, he predicts.

Hamilton Homes specialises in sales across the region, including Alcaidesa, Sotogrande, La Duquesa, Sabinillas and Estepona. The team is looking forward to hearing from you.

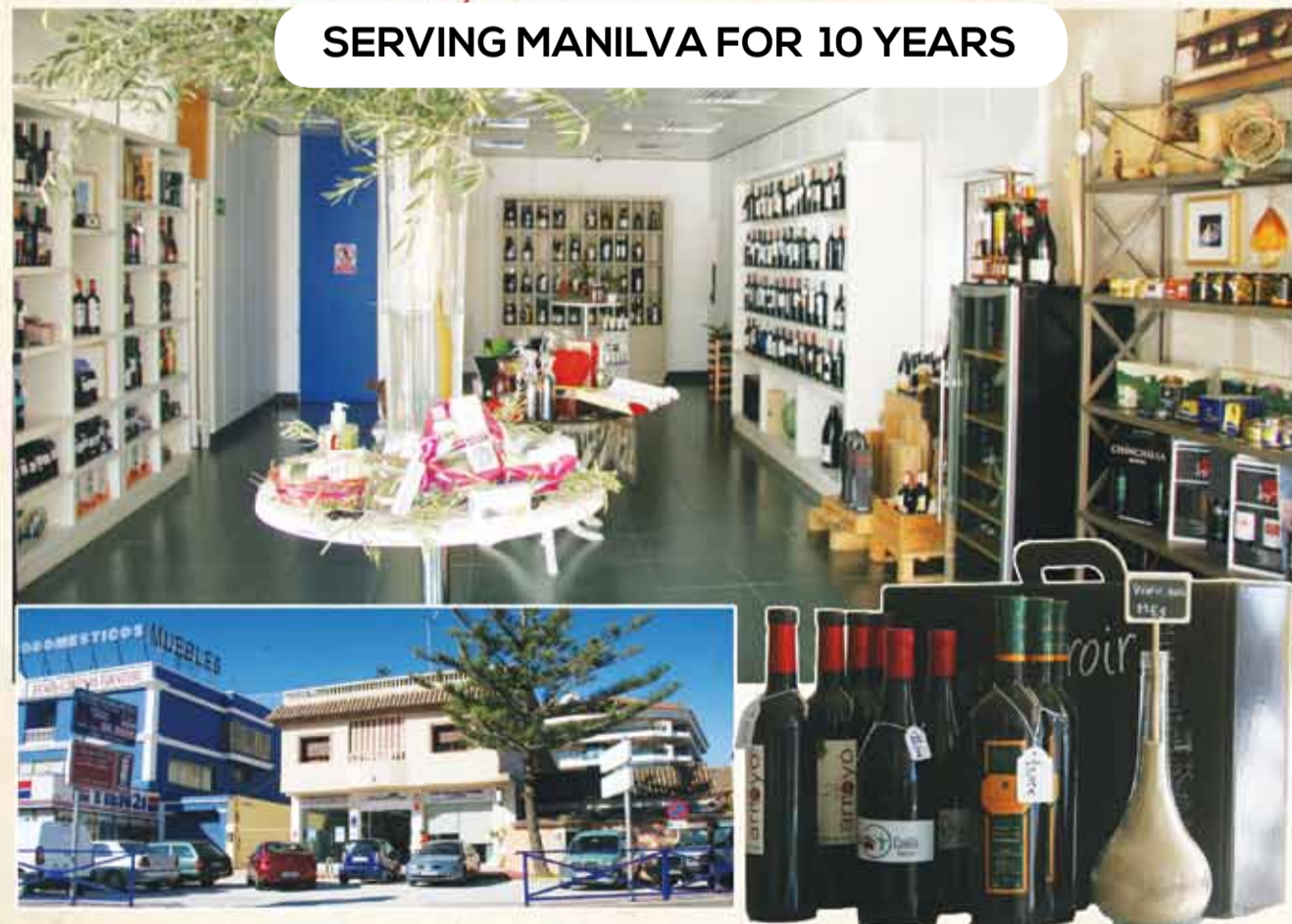
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All about Manilva, Sabinillas and Puerto de la Duquesa

March 5th - March 18th 2015



STRENGTH TO STRENGTH: Steve and Chris Stewart

Books and banter

IT has become a real hub for Manilva society. You can't set foot in the Sabinillas bookshop without running into a couple of friendly faces, even if one of those is affable owner Steve Davies. But four years in, Steve and the team don't plan to slow down any time soon, as the recent appearance of best-selling expat author Chris Stewart proved. Dozens descended on the shop for a meet and greet with the immensely popular author, who has just published his fourth book *The last days of the bus club*. "We are going from strength to strength," explains Steve. "We are now planning to set up a book club and a creative writing club this year."

Tax and legal paperwork can be a minefield when residing overseas, so for quality help and advice it is paramount to talk to people you can trust

THE Recio & Madrona team is made up of economist Gabriel Recio Madrona and lawyer Juana María Madrona, cousins both born and bred in Sabinillas. Juana and Gabriel are keeping it in the family - the latest excitement was Juana's move this year to their Avenida Manilva headquarters. Between them they combine charisma, legal know-how and tax expertise which makes for an unbeatable team. They have had many British clients and continue to enjoy a thriving trade. The homegrown team provides legal, tax, accounting advice as well as specialist assistance with partnerships, vehicle transfers, non-resident procedures, rentals, sale and purchases, property registry, litigation, wills and inheritance. They are both graduates of the University of Malaga: Gabriel trained in Economics and Business and Juana in Law. Gabriel has 20 years experience in tax and originally started as a tax consultant in 1995



VERY BEST ADVICE: Cousins in law Gabriel and Juana

We are family!

before expanding into administration management in 2013. He is currently the only person in Manilva who can register a vehicle under a new name after sale and is in high demand for changing foreign number plates into Spanish ones. Juana has been working as a lawyer since 1997 has expe-

rienced practically every possible scenario. She takes care of legal issues and property sales - ensuring sellers are legitimate, dealing with town hall liaison, and guiding you through the whole process of buying a house smoothly. Juana can take care of your

yearly non-resident taxes, IBI - which saves a lot of extra work. The team is well known in the area for being trustworthy and professional and they are looking forward to hearing from you. For more info, call 952892097/ 658762304 or email info@costamanilva.com

Advertorial

March 5th - March 18th 2015

Less frills, more fun

QUIET at the bar!" cried manager Rob, as sage quiz-master Hilary surveyed the room and drew a deep breath. (You could cut the tense atmosphere with a bar tender's lemon-slicer.) "What is the former name of Belize?" And just like that, our dreams of claiming Sabinillas pub quiz glory disappeared quicker than the free pizza. Three heads sunk into three palms as we fell at the very first hurdle, facing up to the harsh reality of O'Callaghan's quiz, where the great and good of Sabi's expat community do battle every Tuesday. It is here where you see just why so many people choose to live in Sabinillas, where there is a real community atmosphere. Like it or not, you can't head down the paseo or pop into one of the main watering holes without bumping into someone you know. It is a no frills, down to earth place, which only makes it more fun for those in the know, and the pub quiz even more competitive. Luckily for our team, which we cheekily named 'The Under-60s' - and which the quizmaster tactfully elected not to announce - rounds on literature, wordplay and murders pulled us back into contention. So when our enormous and delicious BBQ burgers arrived, we were already licking our lips over geography questions and making hay while the sun shone during the weather round. But our distinct numerical disadvantage soon took its toll,

What happened when three Olive Press reporters challenged the Sabinillas set at O'Callaghan's popular pub quiz? Tom Powell has the answer!

and our youth really came back to bite us during the 1980s music round. Despite successfully persuading the quizmaster that Abyssinia could not possibly be the world's first country in alphabetical order (as it is now called Ethiopia) and that Afghanistan was the right answer, we still struggled to keep up with quiz regulars. A final round on sayings wrapped up the battle, and I won't bore you with the details of exactly where we finished, but a particular phrase about us being 'nice guys' comes to mind!



DOWN TO EARTH: Rob and the team at O'Callaghan's

Advertorial

Leading light

RAFAEL Parra is Manilva-born and bred and an important local employer, thanks to his successful family electrical business. Founded in 1994, Rafalux has trained the vast majority of 'sparkies' in the immediate area, with further plans for growth. And having signed a prestigious deal with Endesa - Spain's largest utility company - two years ago, the company has the ultimate stamp of approval. Rafa heads up the business while sons Daniel, 29, and Antonio, 27, take care of administration and engineering respectively. Both boys studied away from home - Daniel in Granada and Antonio in Algeciras and San Pedro - and have come back to lend their expertise to the company. The company is recuperating well since the crisis and boasts a talented workforce with a great working atmosphere. The English-speaking population of Sabinillas is well-served by Sebastian, their bilingual salesman, a bright spark who is always on hand to solve problems. Visit www.rafalux.es, email rafalux@telefonica.net, or call 951 972 014.

Charity networking

FUNDRAISING for others is all in a day's work for Manilva's Duquesa Charitable Society of St. George. But this time the organisation which raised over €4,000 at Christmas to buy presents for some 400 underprivileged local children will be on the receiving end. A business networking event on March 18 will donate 100% of its proceeds to the charity. The Shaw Marketing Services' event at the Manilva Wine Museum is open to all business people on the Costa del Sol. "I'm thrilled that they have chosen our small local charity to be the recipient of the proceeds of this event, and to have been invited along," said the charity's President, Dean Shelton. "I personally believe the event to be optimal for the future positioning of Manilva as a place to do business." The event runs from 6.30-8pm and entry costs €5, including refreshments. To register email info@shawmarketingservices.com or visit www.shawmarketingservices.com

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Gabriel Recio
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Juana Maria Madrona
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All about Manilva, Sabinillas and Puerto de la Duquesa



FUSION: A tasty tapa at Hemingways

Dining Secrets of Manilva

There is a host of good places to eat if you have the knowledge, writes Jon Clarke

YOU need to get the insider knowledge to find the best places to eat in Manilva.

The obvious spots are definitively not the best places to eat. Take that from me... it has taken me two years to sniff out its true gems.

Ultimately, you need to get into the heart of Sabinillas, into Duquesa Port or up the coast a little to get the taste buds sated.

One true dining secret sits on its own beach between Duquesa and Pueblo Nuevo. Described as a cross between a 'Spaghetti Western and the Flintstones', I feel more like Robinson Crusoe, camped out at **Floria**, an isolated location, with amazing views and the deep blue sea crashing onto the nearby shore.

Run by amiable Dutch-South African Peter and his missus Karen, from Antwerp, it has three capable chefs Emilio, Nigel and Juan Carlos. The menu is simple and is all about good fresh fish and barbecued meats, while the pil pil prawns are easily some of the best on the coast.

Just up the beach, close to Duquesa port you need to look



ROBINSON CRUSOE STYLE: And (right) the team at Floria

serves the very best meat. Up in Sabinillas, the beach is lined with restaurants, but if you are looking for something special, two of its best joints are Miel and Marengo.



BRAND NEW RESTAURANT OPENING IN MARCH



CHIRINGUITO ANDRES Y MARIA
PLAYA DE CASTILLO. DUQUESA

An amazing beach spot, on Playa Castillo, it is just about to reopen in a stylish new modern guise, but with its trademark, straightforward fish-based menu.

Nearby on the main road you will find the finest British fish and chip shop on the entire coast. Well established, punters drive for up to an hour to sample the amazing cod and chips at **Marlows**.

A true institution, it has excellent banquette seats and even better prices. Venture into Duquesa Port and, while there are dozens of restaurants vying for your trade, you need to be careful, as quality is not always paramount.

This however is anything but the case at **Hemingways** where hard-working Ashley has created a great 'fusion' tapas menu, which is high on quality. Constantly looking to improve the menu, it is a nice spot to dine and to enjoy the port ambience. It also has a highly-rated Sunday lunch.

Meanwhile, another good place to eat in the port is **Bistro**, a steakhouse which only

March 5th - March 18th 2015



CLASSIC AND MODERN: Cruz Blanco and (right) Marengo

standards for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

With excellent coffee and a great snacks and tapas menu, it is hardly surprising it is usually full.

Another fine place to eat is **Marengo**, just one year old, but with a distinctly different feel to its nearby rivals.

Run by Isabel, from Madrid, with much of her family in cahoots, it has a great range of tapas, pinchos and raciones to share.

The pulpo on a skewer is excellent, while there is a nice range of wines.

Another great secret to seek out is **Cruz Blanca**, a typical Madrid-style bar/restaurant, which serves up ice cold beers and some excellent fresh seafood.

There are specials by the day and always some good value tapas at the bar.

Owner Juan is a local businessman, who takes a real pride in the place running like clockwork and being the sort of

place that he would like to eat. Another emblematic place is **Café Nenit**, where Jose and his team serve breakfasts and pastries from early morning, tapas for lunch and bar snacks into the evening. And don't forget to ask for 'Ana's special', which changes by the day.

In the heart of the town

It would be impossible to write about Manilva without mentioning the Roman Oasis

meanwhile, look out for **O'Callaghan's** pub if that is more your bag.

A great range of beers and snacks, you would be advised to look out for Karaoke and quiz nights each week.

Two other popular English spots are **Charley's Bar** and



Toni's Bar, which has just opened with a nice big terrace and all of the live sports. While not open till July it would be impossible to write about food in Manilva without mentioning the amazing Roman Oasis, just inland on the road to the Roman Oasis, of course. Over three decades old, it was

here that legendary UK chef Keith Floyd came to spend some of the last few weeks of his life.

A massive fan of the eclectic, original spot, he and owner Paul were close buddies and this is obvious by the amount of photos of Floyd on the walls.



GOOD MIX: Team at Miel, Marlows fish and chips and (above) Bistro

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EXCLUSIVE
By Rob Horgan

UNETHICAL kickback payments from lawyers to estate agents are all too rife on the Costa del Sol.

With lawyers offering commissions or 'kickbacks' of up to 20% in return for conveyancing work from estate agents, the industry's integrity is being broken down at an alarming rate.

The Olive Press is now launching a campaign to find the Costa del Sol's integral lawyers and compile a comprehensive list of those who do things by the book.

The increasing malpractice between lawyers and estate agents ultimately diminishes the quality of service on offer to the customer, as estate agents opt for lawyers based on their commission rates rather than their ability to do the job.

Consequently, lawyers who abide by the rules are losing out on work opportunities to their unethical competitors who may well be less

equipped for the task at hand. Expat lawyer Alex Radford from My Lawyer in Spain has been practicing in the country since 2003.

He said that he has regularly been asked for his commission rate since setting up his business in Marbella.

"I understand that malpractice is rife along the Costa del Sol, with Marbella being a hotspot," he said.

"There have been many occasions when my business card has been put to the bottom of

the pile because I will not pay out commissions.

"Clients need to be made aware of the problem. Currently it is difficult, if not impossible, to find out who is breaking the rules as it is all done under the counter."

Although 'kickback' payments are not deemed illegal they do break the national lawyer's code of practice. According to Article 19 of Spain's official code of eth-

One wonders whether lawyers will be inclined to bite the hand that feeds them



ETHICAL: Estate agent Adam Neale and lawyer Alex Radford



The Olive Press launches a campaign to promote the coast's ethical lawyers and boot out the compromising 'backhander' culture

ics, 'a lawyer may never pay, demand or accept, commissions, or other monies from another lawyer, or any other person for having sent a client or recommending future customers'.

And it would appear that the rule-abiding estate agents are just as frustrated by the backhander culture which appears to have crept into every facet of Costa del Sol bureaucracy. Estepona based estate agent Adam Neale from Terra Meridiana agrees that backhanders and off-the-record payments result in a compromised service for the client.

"I would imagine there is a good argument to make that there is a conflict of interest for both sides," he said.

"My definition of a good lawyer is one who is ethical, thorough, problem solving, diligent and who is contactable on a Friday afternoon.

"If estate agents are recommending lawyers on the basis that they pay them money and not on the basis that they do a good job, one wonders whether lawyers will be inclined to bite the hand that feeds them by giving advice that would undermine a deal?"


"Under such a cash-for-questions arrangement can either side be said to be acting in the best interests of their client?"

To add your name to the Olive Press' list of ethical lawyers email newsdesk@theolivepress.es or call 951 273 575.

British invasion

THE time for Brits to buy a holiday home in Spain is now. As markets favour the pound over the euro, the interest in buying abroad has gone through the roof.

Now, 48% more Britons are searching for property in Spain than this time a year ago. "British borrowers are increasingly interested in Spain, the Balearics and the Canaries, where interest rates are around 3% and lenders expect a 30-40% deposit," said Spanish property broker Simon Conn. Currently, the average budget for a British buyer in Spain is €517,000, higher in Barcelona (€758,000) but lower in Lanzarote (€148,000). In Andalucia, the average budget stands slightly above the nationwide average at around €550,000.


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