

A SPECIAL 10 PAGE OLIVE PRESS SUPPLEMENT

FLYING FREE: In Torremolinos



T is now one of the biggest events in the social calendar.

dar. A raucous celebration of colour, variety and life, Gay Pride is everything it set out to be and more. Madrid was overrun with the colours of the rainbow this June, in what was one of the world's biggest Gay Pride

events.

Now Torremolinos is gearing up for the Costa del Sol's first official Pride festival this month. It comes in a monumental year for the LGBT+ community worldwide. Gay and lesbian marriage is now legal in every single American state, as of this month.

TORREMOLINOS

GAY GUIDE

But that was so last decade for Spain, which this year celebrates the ten-year anniversary of legalised gay mar-riage. Same sex couples have also been able to adopt

In fact, Spain was ranked the most gay-friendly country in the world by the latest Pew Research Center survey. But, of course, it has not always been this way, and there

is yet still a long way to go. The Olive Press is proud to present our first Gay Pride supplement, the first of what we hope will be a long, line of successful specials, promoting the very best of Andalu-cia's LGBT+ community.



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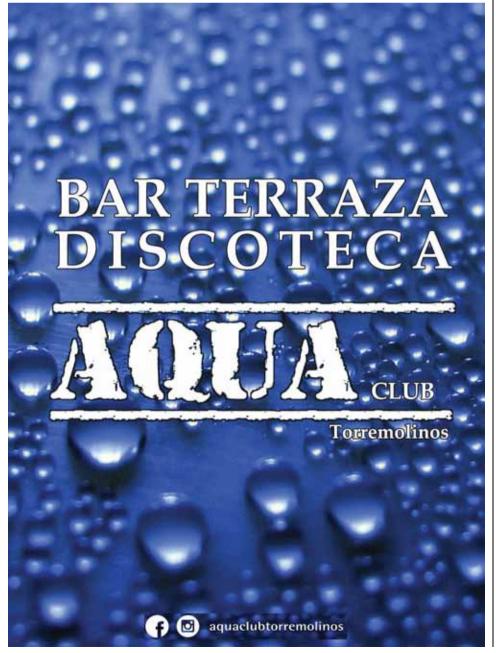


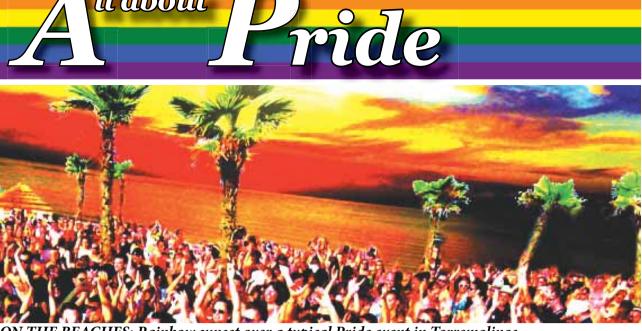


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ON THE BEACHES: Rainbow sunset over a typical Pride event in Torremolinos

LGBT-ers from around the world are flocking to splurge a rainbow of currencies in Spain's gay capital

ll about

HE tills are ringing in To-rremolinos, and it's no longer limited to a 'pink pound' bonanza. Like the rainbow flags flutte-ring proudly over many of the resort's bars and beaches, the one-time gay British Mecca has morphed into a global LGBT destination, with visitors cashing in currencies of every hue

Rainbow warriors

to take advantage of great euro exchange rates. With gay attractions far more

low-key in neighbouring Mala-ga and Marbella, the think pink philosophy in Torremolinos has created a rosy future for expat traders and, in recent times, it's gone way beyond sterling and euros.

The groundswell of Brits and 'Eurogays' flocking to the holiday destination that refuses to stand still have been joined by trans-Atlantic tourists.

Virtually unknown to gay Ame-ricans five years ago, the longevity of the resort's gay scene is attracting more international LGBT visitors, much of that thanks to a deliberate move to push gay business ventures in Torremolinos. And that's why Londoner Charles Clothier opened Bar Arcos last year. "It is very busy here, there's a mass

of nationalities coming from all over the world," he says. "Torremolinos has a reputation like

Mykonos or Ibiza, but in reality you get so much more for your money here "The gay scene is ingrained

into the community. My bar is right next to a Spanish bar, we try and work together and help

each other out." He added: "The gay commu-nity is very open. I don't want to call my bar a 'gay bar' and exclude anyone. I want everybody to be able to come in and enjoy them-

"That might not work everywhere, but that is why I love it here."

The resort's gay status was pioneered by Tony's bar, established in 1962 during Franco's regime and still open today. Not that the dictator approved of same-sex relationships. At that time, gays elsewhere in Spain were being imprisoned, and even executed. But, in Andalucia, the economic benefits outweighed Franco's personal animosity towards this sector of



GOLDEN TIMES: Street performer (above) and drag queen (below)

society and he was forced to turn a blind-eye. It was another first for the pio-

neer of package tours in Spain, and Torremolinos soon became known as the home of the 'pink peseta'. Today the resort proudly flaunts

its officially-designated gay beaches. The one in front of the popular El Gato Lounge is a clear favourite, identifiable by its large rainbow flag and groin-to-groin line-up of mainly male sun worshippers.

Off the beach, the gay social scene centres on the La Nogalera complex in the heart of the town, where gay bars sit cheek by jowl with family restaurants and hetero haunts, a symbol of the town's liberal attitude.

Given the 'macho' reputation of Spanish culture, many firsttime LGBT visitors are surpri-sed at the warm welcome from locals.

And why not? Tradesfolk have these tourists to thank for their

and visible renovations, the town has been working hard to draw international business people into

its gay scene. In 2010, Torremolinos debuted its now annual Expo Gay, which brought more than 15,000 visitors and 180 exhibitors to the town over

three days. Last year, the resort hosted its first International Day of Transvestism du-

ring the now iconic Gay Pride celebrations. This year's outrageous

four-day extravaganza, held at the end of July, is set to be even bigger and better. as it marks a decade since civil partnerships were legalised in Spain.

The gay capital of the coast is determined to hold onto its title and keep reinventing itself.

Torremolinos has gone be-yond pink. Today it's violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red – all seven colours of the LGBT rain-

Stand up and A decade since gay be proud



VIBRANT: Colours of pride



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marriage was passed in Spain, Torremolinos is gearing up for its first official Pride celebration

T may be the gay capital of the coast, but Torremolinos has ne-

I may be the gay capital of the coast, but forremolinos has never held its own official Pride celebration... that is, until now. Torremolinos Gay Pride runs from July 23-26 and marks a decade since gay marriage was passed in Spain. And with a massive gay contingent living on the Costa del Sol, it will no doubt rival the country's other Pride celebrations. Event organiser Santiago Rubio cannot wait. "It is going to be a great weekend," he says. "Torremolinos is a great place for this and it will rival all other Prides in Spain."

July 24 will be dedicated to lesbian celebration, with a LGBT march taking place the next day. The final celebration takes place on July 26 with a party on Torre-

molinos' beaches. Elsewhere in Spain, Madrid has carved itself out as a frontrunner in gay celebrations, while Barcelona is often regarded as the gay

capital of Spain. Both cities hold their annual event in June, with this year's festivities taking on an added importance due to the anniversary of

gay marriage. In fact, in 2007 Madrid's celebration was crowned 'best Pride in the world' and the Spanish capital has been lined up to host the 'World Pride' in 2017.



CELEBRATE: Flying the flag







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rcos is the new 'pot of gold' discovery for TV stars and the rainbow brigade.

FAME: Charles meets Marbs cast

WHEN Charles Clothier opened Arcos Bar in April of 2015, he hoped to bring something more 'upmar-ket' to the Torremolinos bar scene.

Inspired by the pubs in his native London, Clothier envisioned Arcos as both smart and laid-back, a place with a great atmosphere and even better drinks.

"Everyone is welcome here," Clothier says. "Gays, lesbians, people from all over.

> weeks, Ar-cos' star continues to rise. Weeks ago, the producers

in

life and LG-

BT-friendly

And thanks

to several

high-profile

visitors

recent

locales.

ll about

reality televiof ITV's new sion series, *Life on Marbs*, approached Clothier and re-quested permission to film an episode of the show in Arcos. "I didn't think much of it: I thought it'd be one man with a camera," says Clothier. He was therefore amazed

To the delight of Clothier and his partner, Arcos has quickly

become one of the most pop-ular spots in town – which

says a lot, as Torremolinos is famous for its vibrant night-

when carload after snazzy carload of cast and crew members arrived on his door-

Arcos is the new 'pot of gold' discovery for TV stars and the rainbow brigade Everyone.' step.

"They had all their own lighting, they played their own mu-sic," Clothier says.

"It was really something." The show, following the exploits of more than a dozen wealthy



cos airs in August According to Clothier, the plot centres on a rendezvous between a gay cast member and a romantic interest. It is only fitting that such an episode should be set in Tor-remolinos, a longtime international destination for LGBT tourists. The Olive Press recently dubbed the city 'LGBT capital of the Costa del Sol'.

Ar-

But Clothier is quick to point out that Arcos is not a 'gay bar'. He wants people of all sexual orientation to feel welcome there.

And if the rave reviews published on websites like TripAdvisor are any indication, just about everyone who vis-its Arcos leaves happy. Customers gush about the bar's 'fabulous hosts', 'brilliant at-mosphere' and 'cocktails to die for'.

Clothier suspects it is these attributes, together with Arcos' chic modern decor, that led to an encounter with an-other celebrity just days after

other celebrity just days after the Life on Marbs shoot. "It all happened so fast," Clothier says. "They asked, 'Do you mind if we take some pictures in your bar?' And in walks Miss World Malaga, ti-ara and all."

Clothier is still unsure of what brought the recently crowned 19-year-old Maria Ruiz to Torremolinos.

One thing, however, is certain: Between Ruiz's appear-ance, the *Life on Marbs* shoot and the bar's stellar reputation among visitors and locals alike, a visit to Arcos is top of the list.

La alternativa que aumentará tus sentidos The alternative that will increase your senses





a mejor terraza de Torremolinos best terrace of Torremolinos

/ Corner Street D TORREMOLINOS



FOUNTAIN OF FUN: Hip to be square in Pueblo Blanco

Hidden oasis!

HE last thing you expect to find in the busy town of Torremolinos - just a five-minute walk from the train station - is a white village

full of charm. Al fresco dining, international restaurants and stylish bars await you in the beautiful area

of Pueblo Blanco. A labyrinth of narrow alleyways built in the early 1970s, it is a charming, must visit zone for foodies and anyone looking for

somewhere a little different. But Pueblo Blanco has had to work hard to shake off its notorious past.

The area has been mired in controversy and intrigue since its creation, with rumours that it had been created out of the proceeds of a nasty kidnapping! It had soon become the main centre for the buzzing nightlife of Torremolinos in the 70s and the awakening of the gay scene in the 80s.

At its peak, 48 bars/clubs were crammed into the narrow corridors situated between Calle Skal and Calle Casablanca.

That is until the residents living above successfully won the war on fun.

Their complaints and police intervention closed most of the late-night bars, leaving only Shwarma Simon, to this day, as the lone survivor.

The white village has had a renaissance, with a real sense of community and pride in being straight friendly!

The bars and restaurants are as varied as the crowd they attract.

In particular, you will find authentic Italian cuisine direct from Rome at Osteria de la Roma. The pizza's are to die for and the service that will put a smile on your face.

Meanwhile, tapas don't come any better than at Pletora, with its fine dining decor and relaxed service. But Pueblo Blanco has had to fight hard to shake off its notorious past and claims that it was built out of money from a kidnapping, writes Chris Birkett



AT NIGHT: Pueblo Blanco offers a night to remeber

Teteria Albanta is worth a visit. Teresa serves Moroccan teas, coffees and fruit shakes. In the summer months you can enjoy a cooling cocktail and an unforgettable mojito! It's the ideal spot to sit back, forget your troubles and watch the world go by. The star of the show though has to be Boomerang Bar run by Gill, a Scot who definitely challenges the stereotype.

A warm and friendly greeting is assured and you leave feeling

Ice cold beer, fine wines and cocktails are served on the generous terrace. Surrounding the beautiful candlelit fountain that acts as a wonderful backdrop, this is the place to be seen.

you have made a new friend.

If you are looking for a classier, trendier destination in Torremolinos, then this is the place for you

For you. Pueblo Blanco is the hidden gem that probably won't stay hidden for long.

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Fride Which way's the beach? EL GATO REACI

EL GATO BEACH: The place to be seen

There really is something for everyone in gay-friendly Torremolinos. Grab a cocktail and your sunnies to read the Olive Press' guide to the 'hottest' places to hang out this summer

ll about

FFERING beaches, budgie-smugglers and bronzing, Torrehas molinos become a real gay paradise over

the years. And with the burgeon-ing hub of gay-friendly bars and restaurants, there are also a number of beaches within easy reach from the town centre.

Locals and gay travellers alike flock to the beaches which see the biggest gay crowds from April through to October creating quite a stir in the 60.000 population town.

PRIDE OF THE COAST El Gato/Eden Gay beach

THE most popular gay beach on the Costa del Sol, summer weekends attract gavs in

their droves. You can expect around 500 gays and it is rumoured to be the trendiest crowd on the coast

Drawing visitors from as far away as Gibraltar and Marbella, the rainbow flags fly high pride here. And this with

s gay offers beach free high speed wifi. massages, luxury sunbeds, drag shows and other entertainment on weekends.

Accessibility is good, and the gay venues of El Gato Lounge has friendly gay staff who promise a relaxing beach

GAY BACK IN THE DAY Poseidon Beach

vibe - and incredible tapas.

THE go-to sandy spot for gays during the 1980s and 90s, today Poseidon is no longer gav.



SOUL FOOD: High heel dining

You will find a clutch of gay visitors, mainly those from back in the day that continue to make a habit of hitting this beach.

The 'gay and happy' vibe is in short supply here – and the main restaurant is straight along with most who eat and drink there.

SECLUDED SPOT **Guadalmar Beach**

AKA Campo Golf beach, it is Torremolinos' naked gay beach and around a third of visitors tend to be gay - more during weekends. A 40 minute walk from the centre of town, it also attracts a big straight crowd and al-though nudity is encouraged, no one will force you to re-move your speedos! If a more secluded spot is your thing this beach is per-fect and the two chiringuitos.

NUDE OR ELSE Benal Natura

SURROUNDED by rocks and a sort of lagoon, it is another nude gay-friendly beach just 15 minute's drive outside town.

The secluded spot near Torre-quebrada has a gay crowd of approximately 40% but less on weekends when it is more family-friendly.

It is a compulsory naked beach supervised by a naturist community, where swimsuits are not permitted.

Visit gaytorremolinos.eu/ for more details.

WIN WIN WIN: Two nights at a bohemian oasis

HE lovely people at Joy Beach Hostel are helping celebrate the launch of the Olive Press' new online supplement 'All about Pride'.

You can win two nights' free accommodation for two, subject to availability. Joy Beach Hostel, opened just over a year ago,

is a bohemian oasis 50 metres from the Torre-molinos Beach!

Entry couldn't be simpler, just go to: www. facebook.com/groups/1604644763157950/ and ask to join as a member, then upload your photographic interpretation of JOY. The winner will be picked by Chris Birkett of *the Olive* Press and Carolina of the Joy Beach Hostel. Closing date is August 31 2015.

Winners will bez announced in the Olive Press, online at www.theolivepress.es and the Facebook Group. Good luck and be happy!



JOY BEACH: Terrace escape

Hot nights in La Nogalera Born out of Spanish oppression, the gay heart of Torremolinos still thrives more than half a century on

HE year was 1962. Spain was bowed in submission under the oppressive rule of General Franco. Freedom was a rare commodity, ho-mosexuality a crime that dared not

speak its name.

Across the country, gay men and women were being thrown into prison and publicly lambasted for their sexuality. But one corner of the Costa del Sol didn't buy into the dictator's harsh regime.

Sticking two fingers up to fascism,

THITH FRESHLY BUILT: La Nogalera circa 1960's

Torremolinos offered Europeans the chance to live the free life they desired

Drugs, sex, bikinis and rock 'n' roll - it was no holds barred as Torremolinos established itself as the new anythinggoes capital of Europe. Tony's Bar, opened in 1962 and with

its tills still ringing today, became Spain's first ever gay bar, christening the resort's alternative status.

Based in La Nogalera (loose transla-tion, 'walnut grove', and the scene is certainly 'nuts' in a good way), Tony's Bar set the LGBT district on its rainbow path.

The tourism revolution of the 1970s and '80s flipped customs on their heads and boosted the resort's reputation.

As Scandinavians, Brits, Germans and even Americans flocked to the Costa del Sol, its gay scene exploded into life. Locals rubbed shoulders with hello sailors from passing American aircraft carriers. Brits battled for bar stools beside blonde, bronzed beauties from Scandinavia.

And people weren't only coming for a holiday... they wanted to stay. Alongside the bars boom, demand for

housing also went through the roof. As Alberto Sanchez of Apartamentos

CUTTING THE RIBBON: Opening a new era

la Nogalera explains, "The boom in tourism led to a demand in housing." His family erected some of the first apartments which are still standing today.

today. "With all the expats and Spanish people flocking to the coast, it became more necessary to build homes," he says. "It really took off and my family ben-efited from it." The ball set rolling in the Swinging Sixties gathered momentum during

the '70s and was out of control by the '80s.

Today La Nogalera is a Mecca for the entire LGBT scene, although the scenery has changed. Aqua is the latest bar to open its

doors, although it's one of the most eccentric.

A bar, club and sauna all rolled into one, Aqua has already established it-self as the go-to place in Torremolinos. New watering holes may come and go but, more than half a century on, Tony's Bar and La Nogalera are still going strong. They have both earned a place in history.

And, judging by the many tales told over foaming pints of ale in this nutty district, their story looks set to run and run.



BOOMING: In the 70's

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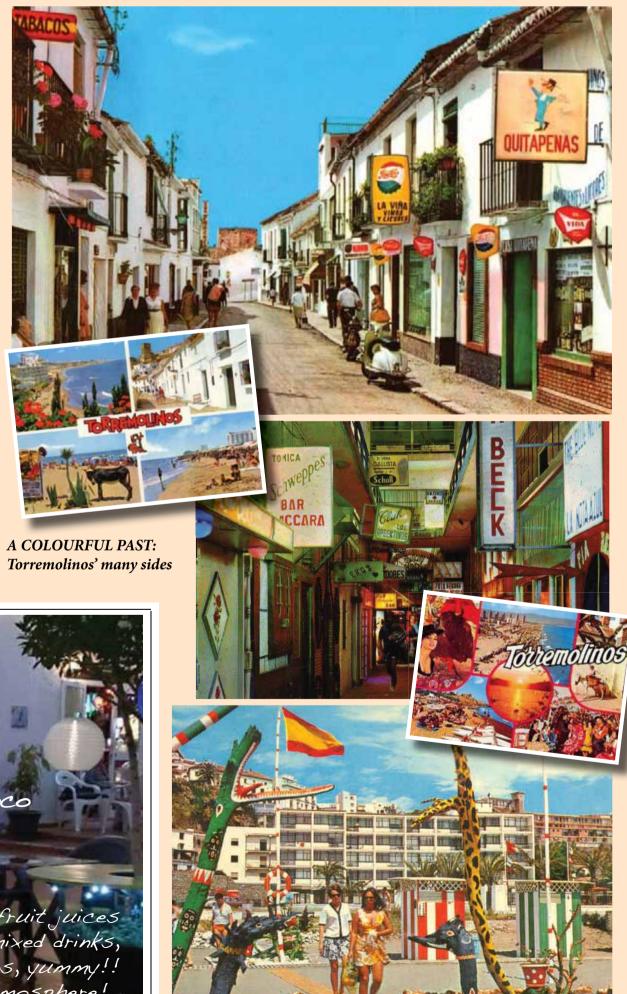




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<u>ride</u>

ll about



Osteria L'arte de Roma

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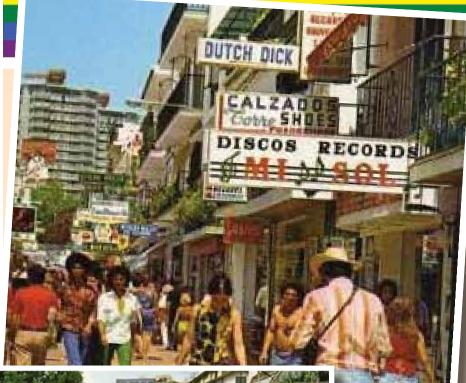


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Tetería Albanta Smoothie & Juice Bar Torremolinos, Pueblo Blanco

Wide selection of natural fruit juices and milk shakes. Premium mixed drinks, cocktails, homemade mojitos, yummy!! Great atmosphere!..





DISCO: Torremolinos 70's disco scene with a 'dutch dick' flavour



Finding 'duende'

could not be any further from the big bus tour companies, ferrying tourists around Spain's so-called hot spots.

A Toma Tours trip is about get-ting to the heart of Andalucian and Spanish culture, gastronomy, art and 'duende' Learn to photograph stunning

landscapes like a pro, cook – and then eat – the finest Andalucian and Moroccan cuisine in exquisite settings, experience the majesty of Sevilla in holy week from a privi-leged balcony... it's all in their impressive arsenal. Trips are undertaken in ve-

hicles seating just four - eight passengers, while there is also the option of a chauf-feur-driven Mercedes S-Class for the classiest of bespoke



Toma Tours are about lifting the lid on

MANNI: Toma Tours tours.

Some of their famous day trips include Mr Henderson's railway to Ronda, magical Morocco and a tastebud-titillating tapas tour of Malaga. It's all the brainchild of English expat Manni Coe, who

first moved to Sevilla in 2000 and has not stopped search-ing every nook and cranny of this wonderful region even since, constantly on the lookout for more hidden gems.

One of his three brothers, Nathan Coe, a fine art photographer, joined the group on April's photography tour of Andalucia, while another Reuben, who was born with Down Syndrome, joined Manni out in Spain two years ago and has gone from strength to strength since.

It's fair to say the Coes are a close-knit bunch, just like a Toma Tours group. For more information visit

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"Amazing day in Tangier!" Had such an amazing trip to Tangier yesterday!! I honestly don't have a single criticism, Reviewed June 10, 2015 the day was perfect.





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Taking a different view on life

Wilfred and John swapped a life working with tulips in Holland to running a dream, rural escape near Ronda

HEN John and Wilfred decided to swap Holland for a life in southern Spain they were looking for a business to turn around and run.

Looking for authenticity, they head-ed for the hills and scoured a series of mountain towns, including Ron-da, Antequera and Alora.

But while each had its own flavour, it wasn't until they found the charming white town of Arriate, 10 minutes from Ronda, that they knew they had struck gold.

Sitting in a stunning rural valley, the pretty town was big enough to sus-tain dozens of its own shops, but its locals also had a very open, friendly mentality. Best of all, there was an incredible

hotel up for sale, sitting above the town, with breathtaking views and beautiful grounds.

"We really loved the place and the view and fell in love with it straight away," explained John, 48, who previously worked in the flower bulb

business in Holland. Having undertaken a massive makeover, the rooms have been made much lighter and have better maximised the view.

"The business has grown well and people love relaxing here and then visiting Ronda nearby.

Continues Wilbert, 43, who worked for many years as a life coach: "We are opening our pool this August, which will make a great difference for guests.



TRANQUILITY: Escape and relax near to rural Ronda

"But, either way, while it is hotter up here during the day in summer, it cools down really nicely at night and you will never find it too hot or sticky to sleep," adds John. The pair, who met in Amsterdam

18 years ago, are happy to cater for guests on request, but - best of all -they are spoilt for choice for where to eat locally.

Aside from having over a dozen great tapas bars in Arriate, they have - according to TripAdvisor - the best restaurant in Andalucia. El Muelle, run by fellow Dutchman Frank. "It is an incredible place with excellent food and people travel for miles around to eat there," says John. "And then of course you have plenty of amazing places to eat in Ronda too if you should ever get bored of that.

Visit www.arriadhhotel.com for more information



On top of the World!

Arriadh Hotel is situated in the beautiful 'Serranía de Ronda', just a 10 minute drive from Ronda's city centre. The village Arriate, undiscovered by mass tourism, is within walking distance and offers a wide variety of restaurants and tapas bars.

Arriadh Hotel is the perfect 'home away from home' to rediscover Ronda and the area. Or just to relax and take in the breath taking views and sunsets from one of the terraces, the garden, the swimming pool or your own balcony. If you want to stay in, don't worry. Your hosts John and Wilbert always have a variety of tapas available and on request they will prepare a lovely dinner.



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