

# The Front Desk

APRIL 2005



Dear Clients,

Welcome to the second edition of The Front Desk, letting you know what is happening with HPS, your property and the Costa del Sol in general. Many thanks for all the encouragement I have received following the first edition.

## **Banking (UK clients)**

Michael and Felicity have just opened a bank account with the Banco Halifax Hispania and thought that you might be interested in the following information. Currency transfers between the Halifax in the UK and Banco Halifax Hispania are free of charge. You can set up your Spanish account by contacting the Halifax in the UK. The nearest branch is in Marbella and the staff speak excellent English and are very helpful and friendly - and there is usually no queue.

## **New convenience Store**



A new convenience store, which is owned by El Cortes Ingles, has just opened in the Montes Halcones Commercial Centre, very close to Los Arqueros. The hours are from 8am until 2am, 365 days a year, so it will be the ideal place for purchasing your essentials.

## **Coldest March**

March was one of the coldest in recent history on the Costa del Sol. At Los Arqueros temperatures dropped to below 0 °C. Snow was visible on La Concha, the mountain that is the backdrop for Marbella and on the mountains behind Los Arqueros.

## **Website Progress**

Our promotional campaign to increase the number of visitors to the HPSSL Web site has begun. We have applied for inclusion in the Yahoo directory, and we are pleased to report that the site has been accepted. We have already received several additional visitors through the directory in the past few days. Being accepted by the Yahoo directory will have a positive impact on our visibility in the search engines, and is an important first step in the campaign.

## **A Word of Warning**

As always, please be aware yourselves, and make your guests aware, that they should be alert whether out in a supermarket or in the apartment. Only last week, Jamie's mother had her purse stolen from her handbag while she was out doing her shopping in the Hipercor, in El Corte Ingles. It is a good idea to leave valuables in your safe.

## **Ring My Bell**

This week Prosegur have installed an alarm system in the office which is connected to a monitoring station. It incorporates a "panic" button and additional buttons to call the fire service and an ambulance. We are negotiating with Prosegur to offer a similar installation at a discounted rate to our clients. If you are interested in further information, please give me a call.

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## When a door closes



Here is a recent photo of Jamie and Rodd risking life and limb and abseiling to the rescue of some guests who left their house key in the back of the door. This is very common and we ask that you can take extra care when you or your guests are in the apartments. Many of Spanish doors have the ability to close without warning, locking you out. If the key is in the back of the door, when you are locked out – it can result in an expensive locksmith's bill.

## Driving in Spain



Please be aware that the laws are getting stricter to come in line with drink-driving regulations in many other parts of Europe. In addition to a very heavy fine and a ban from driving, a prison sentence is not uncommon. We want you to spend lots of time in Spain, but not in jail! We recommend Taxi Sol on 952 823 535 or 952 774 488. Using your mobile phone in Spain could turn out to be more expensive than you planned. The police are clamping down on the use of mobiles whilst driving. One of our colleagues was recently fined 100 € on the spot. They are soon going to implement points against licences as in the UK, for minor traffic offences.

## Fine Feeding

Try La Estrella (closed Tuesdays). It is located between Pub Charles and Alfredo's just off Avenida de la Constitucion. Michael celebrated his birthday there recently – excellent value and very friendly service. Afterwards stroll to the bodega next door, El Candil, and boogie on down to latin and flamenco music with the locals upstairs. For something more casual try tapas with a glass of sherry or wine at El Pozuelo – very Andalusian! It's located just 2 -3 minutes walk from our office near the 'young lovers' statue. The owner likes you to speak Spanish, so you get to practice: "Quiero esto, por favor!" Saying that, a pointing finger also does the trick. We love the tortilla, which is served in a slice of Spanish bread/pan, with tomato and some garlic mayo.

## Mayday, Mayday...

Our office will be closed for the Fiesta de Trabajo on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. As usual we will be contactable for emergencies.

## Tax Facts

Following the introduction of the tax service offered by Guillermo, reported in last month's edition, I am pleased to say that a number of clients are taking advantage of this service.

## Golf

One client has suggested that we approach a number of his favourite golf courses to extend our range of discounted offerings. We have already secured a contract with one of these, La Duquesa, and are able to offer introductory discounted prices of 55€ (normal price 60€)

I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you soon.

Best wishes from,

# Beverley

Beverley at the Front Desk