

The Front Desk



February 2009

Dear Clients,

Looking back to the Front Desk for February 2008 I see that I was reporting extremes of weather over here – torrential rain and storm damage – and this year has seen a repeat with heavy rain and storms continuing into February. We have had the occasional sunny day, but generally this has not been a good time to visit the Costa del Sol. The good news is that the drought restriction has been officially lifted, so you will be able to water your gardens and terrace plants to your heart's content!!!

Maintenance

However, this has been a good time to carry out routine maintenance of properties. We are carrying out some changes at N^o 16 with new windows in the lounge area, glass curtains (enclosing the covered terrace) and new tiling. The new windows have the advantage of improving security and giving an additional enclosed seating area to enjoy the sunshine in the cooler months.

Jamie and Co have been busy with painting and decorating, as well as a range of smaller upgrading jobs. One thing to remember is your air conditioning - it is important to ensure that it is regularly serviced, particularly if you are relying on it for heating as well as cooling.

Christmas and New Year

This year Jamie and I were in Spain over the Christmas and New Year period and I missed my retail therapy visit to Marks and Spencer. So I am having a week's visit to the North of England – what a time to choose with all the snow and ice. I shall be away from Friday 6th February and will be back in the office on 16th. Michael will be covering my work – please be gentle with him!!!

Theatre

Jamie and I are appearing in a Comedy Thriller next month at the Atalaya Park Hotel, from the 20th until the 22nd of March. The play is called 'Tiptoe Through the Tombstones' by Norman Robbins and sees Jamie in some very strange costumes. This leads me nicely onto the fact that "The Full Monty" is being performed from 20th – 29th March at the Salon Varietes in Fuengirola, followed by "A View From The Bridge" by Arthur Miller from 4th – 8th April. Those of you who have been to the Salon before will know that the productions are up to "West End" standard. So let us know if you would like us to reserve tickets for you.

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Public Holidays

Andalucia Day falls on Saturday 28th February. This is a public holiday in Spain, but as it falls on a Saturday it will not affect most businesses.

Mañana – No Way Jose

Anyone who thinks Spain is a sleepy old place should take note of the latest initiative by the Spanish traffic authority which has just launched a new mobile phone SMS and email alert system to inform drivers if they have been fined. They say they want to modernise the notification procedure, but both individuals and companies would have to sign up voluntarily to take part in the new scheme. It's part of a plan from the Ministry for Public Administration which is keen to speed up procedures, and follows a successful pilot scheme which used a car rental company.

Inflation falls to 0.8 percent in Spain.

The inflation index for Spain has reduced to an all time low at 0.8%, down 0.7% on the month, and due once again mainly to the reduction in the price of petrol. The fall in the Euribor rate has sent mortgages to their lowest level in seven years. It will end January at 2.622% which will take the average monthly mortgage payment across the country down by 156 €. On the negative side unemployment increased to 14.4%, far above the Eurozone average of 8%.

Endesa Electricity Bills

The new procedure to issue monthly electricity accounts based upon alternate estimated and actual meter readings has created a furore. Consumer groups claim that this procedure is fraudulent and that consumers are due a refund. Endesa say they are now to eliminate their new controversial procedure. No final details have been agreed but consumer groups claim that Endesa have carried out an illegal procedure in the estimation of December bills. They are demanding that consumers be repaid the money they have lost through overcharging. Meanwhile a revision of tariffs planned for April has now been postponed until July, following these allegations of abuse.

EU Directive No. 456179

Finally, in order to meet the conditions for joining the Single European currency, all citizens of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland must be made aware that the phrase 'Spending a Penny' is not to be used after 31st December 2009.

From this date, the correct terminology will be: '**Euronating**'.

Thank you for your attention

Hasta Marzo

Kind regards,

Beverley

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