

The Front Desk



April 2011

Dear Clients and Friends,

Last weekend we put the clocks forward in time to enjoy the arrival of some wonderfully warm and sunny weather. The seafront promenades were busy with many people enjoying a stroll (or hobble in Michael's case) and soaking up the spring sunshine. What a difference from a little over two weeks ago when we experience torrential rain, fierce wind and many areas locally suffered serious flooding and landslides, some blocking major roads. Let's hope that this week's changes are the beginning of the good weather and that visitors arriving for Easter will enjoy "buen tiempo".

News from the Office

We are gradually reaching a conclusion with our transfer from Telefonica to Vodafone and hopefully will see the promised benefits from this change. By the time everything is completed, it will have taken six months – that's "high tech" for you.

Community Administration

Many of you will be aware that Michael wrote an article for the recent Sur in English supplement on the subject of good community administration. Interestingly one of our clients called in to see us to discuss options for changing administrator directly as a result this article and because of his dissatisfaction with the current administration company. We shall await developments.

On this theme we have just had one of our cleaning contracts renewed with a large community and this is good news for us as it guarantees employment for another year for two members of our staff. Additionally we are providing maintenance services and administrative support to the owners and residents.

Fiestas, Holidays and Exams

This year May Day falls on a Sunday, which means that the fiesta will be carried over to Monday 2nd May. That weekend will be a busy time for Michael who will be swotting for his Spanish A level oral examination which will be held on the 3rd.

The first day of Jamie's and my spring holiday (Greece again) is 4th May and we will be back in the office on the 12th. During this time Michael and Rodd will be holding the fort. But it will be a particularly busy time for Michael who will also be revising for his written A level exam which will take place on the 16th. During this month I will therefore be trying to ensure that everything is ship shape in order to ensure that he does not have a nervous breakdown while I am away!!

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Theatre

Jamie (ably supported by me, of course) has just completed his first production as stage manager. So, he can now add this role to that of actor and light-and-sound man. The play, "Stage Fright", was produced by ITS (International Theatre Studio) in San Pedro. Watch this space for details of future productions.

New Speed Limit

The new 110 km per hour speed limit continues to be a source of much controversy. There are those who think that it is still too high and those who think that it is far too low. There is also confusion amongst different regions of the Guardia Civil Trafico which is charged with enforcing the new limit. The new speed limit signs were installed throughout Spain overnight – nothing "mañana" about that – and are accompanied by a new punitive scale of fines and even imprisonment. The best advice seems to be that drivers should obey the new limit and generally speaking they are. Perhaps one day they will observe the parking rules as well...

Tourism

There is optimism in Andalusian Tourist Board that the unrest in the Arab world, particularly in Tunisia and Egypt will be good for tourism in Spain, whereas, travel agents in the UK are being cautious about this kind of prediction at the moment. However, there is also hope that Spanish tourists will also choose to stay at home this year, rather than go abroad themselves. At HPS we have recently received a number of enquiries from French visitors, which is an interesting new trend.

The 22 days of strikes planned by airport staff throughout Spain over the part-privatisation plan have now been called off after agreement was reached with their employers (the Government). This has come as a great relief to the tourist industry and its employees as well as prospective visitors.

New Art Museum In Málaga

One of the major cultural developments in Málaga was the opening last weekend of the new Museo Carmen Thyssen in the Palacio Villalón in the historic heart of the city. The collection of over 230 works come from the private collection of Baroness Carmen Thyssen, many of whose works are housed in the museum that bears her name in Madrid. The core works on display will have an Andalusian theme and will be accompanied by seasonal exhibitions from her Madrid collection. The Baroness has 1600 works in her collection, so there will be plenty to see both in Málaga and Madrid.

Municipal Elections

Municipal elections take place in Spain on Sunday 22nd May. Billboards supporting the main parties have become a regular feature of the roadsides throughout the country. There are also many fringe parties – mostly promising to be more honest than the main parties. Not a difficult task... And most parties are also trying to cultivate the foreign residents' votes. A major campaign is underway to encourage expats to take part in the elections and even stand as candidates themselves. At the moment I am too busy looking after my clients, but if my country calls me..... Until next month....

¡Hasta la vista!

Beverley

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