

The Front Desk



November 2008

Dear Clients,

This month's newsletter finds its way to you on Halloween at the start of a religious weekend in Spain. Tomorrow (Saturday 1st November) is All Saints Day, "Todos Santos", when the Church remembers all the saints (known and unknown) and is a public holiday. Sunday is All Souls Day when the Church remembers the spirits of all those lingering in purgatory – and is not a public holiday!!!

Fiestas

Apart from All Saints Day there are no public holidays during the remainder of November. The next dates to note in your diaries are Saturday 6th December (Constitution Day) and Monday 8th December (Immaculate Conception).

Where a public holiday falls on a Saturday in Spain, it is not "carried over" to the following Monday, as is the case in the UK. However, where the holiday falls on a Sunday, it is carried over to the following day and offices and shops will be closed.

Traffic Check Points

Drivers will no longer have to search in their glove compartments for their insurance papers if stopped by an officer of the law. From now on it will be up to the Guardia Civil or Police officers themselves to check that a vehicle has valid insurance by consulting the Insured Vehicle Computer Database (FIVA).

Although insurance companies have been obliged to put their clients' details on this database since 1995, police officers have continued to ask drivers to produce their documents at roadside checks. Previously drivers have faced fines of 60 euros for not being able to show their insurance papers

Meanwhile the Government is being asked to modify the law so that it is no longer obligatory to carry a set of spare headlamp, brake light and indicator bulbs plus the tools required to change them. The reason for this is that new cars are fitted with xenon lights which have to be changed by a mechanic, making the regulation "obsolete".

November Weather

Statistically November is the wettest month on the Costa del Sol. An average of four inches of rain falls, compared with three inches in October and December. Average temperatures continue to fall to around 18^o Celsius (max) and 11^o (min). December will be a little cooler at around 16^o (max) and 9^o (min) – not fantastically hot, but better than frost and snow!!! Saying that Granada has this week enjoyed their first snowfall of the season and we can definitely feel the chill in the air on the Costa del Sol.

Tel: (0034) 952 78 49 83 (3 Lines), Fax: 952 78 34 08, Emergency Helpline: 00 34 606 97 58 33

Web site: www.spanishrentalholidays.com E-mail: enquiries@spanishrentalholidays.com

HPS Property Services Siglo XXI (SL), Urb. El Alto N^o 16, Los Arqueros Golf, Benahavís, 29679, (Málaga), España.
CIF N^o B – 92606953

Economy

There is some good news on the economy. Figures published in October showed that inflation in Spain in September stood at 4.5 %. This is down from 4.9% in August and 5.3% (peak) in July. This reduction is due almost entirely to the reduction in fuel costs.

Less encouraging is the news that Spain's unemployment rate climbed to 11.3 percent in the third quarter, while the total number of people out of work rose to almost 2.6 million, the highest figure since 2000. The construction sector has been hardest hit, with that workforce down by 354,200 in the third quarter relative to the previous year.

One side effect of this is the reduction in income that local councils are receiving from building licence applications. We have the impression that they are sending their inspectors out far and wide in order to discover any work that might require a licence and that they are applying rules strictly, so that they can generate as much available revenue as possible!!

November Office Hours

Just in case any of you have not been paying attention, Jamie and I leave for our holidays tonight. I will be back in the office on 19th November. While we are away Michael will be covering for me as well as assisting Rodd with maintenance service. He may even find time to do some of his own work!! The basic plan is for him to be in the office during the morning and out and about in the afternoon as required. As always our emergency phone will be operational 24 x 7 and you will be able to contact Michael or Rodd if you have an urgent enquiry.

Excursions From Home

This is a great time to book an overnight stay in one of the great cities of Andalucia: Cadiz, Jerez, Sevilla, Granada, Cordoba...All are within a couple of hours easy drive and are now comfortable to visit in the cooler autumn temperatures. Prices for internet bookings are excellent. Michael booked into a 5 star hotel in Jerez at the weekend – “executive” double room for 70 € per night.

Marbella Football

Fans of the “beautiful game” might like a Sunday afternoon watching Marbella FC. To be honest, my sport of choice is shopping, but I realise this doesn't agree with some of you chaps - and besides, this is your local team!! More information about fixtures can be found on the following link <http://www.marbellafc.com/index.php>.

Well that's all for now folks. I shall be thinking of you all as we wing our way to the Maldives.

Hasta la vista!

Kind regards,

Beverley

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