

# The Front Desk



October 2011

Dear Clients and Friends,

August ended with one or two showers of rain, but the hot daytime temperatures returned at the beginning of the month. However, evenings became increasingly cool. Now we have reached the end of a very pleasant month, and it is time to wear a light sweater in the evenings at least.

## Holidays

I am sending you this copy of the Front Desk a couple of days earlier than usual, in order to ensure that my desk is clear when I leave the office on Friday evening to start my holiday. As a reminder, I shall be away from Friday evening 30<sup>th</sup> September and will be back at my desk on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>. If you have plans to visit during that period, however tentative, and have not yet let me know, please let me have details urgently.

As usual Michael will be covering the office activities as well as assisting Rodd, who will be standing in for Jamie. The plan is for the office to be staffed in the morning whenever possible between 09.00 and 13.00 Spanish time, but this will depend upon outside emergencies that Michael may have to deal with. If there is no response to the office phone, please leave a message and Michael will call you back a.s.a.p.

If your call requires an urgent response, please call our 24-hour helpline (**00 34 606 97 58 33**) and speak to Rodd. If you have guests visiting during this period, please make them aware of this information.

## Fiestas

There are two public holidays in October on consecutive Wednesdays 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Our office will be closed on these days. Our 24-hour helpline will be manned as always (**00 34 606 97 58 33**). Those of you with sharp eyes will notice that I return to work on Tuesday and have Wednesday as a day's holiday. That's the life.

## On The Stage

Jamie and I performed a short play at the ITS "garden party" in the park at Benahavís on 18<sup>th</sup> September. The audience seemed to enjoy watching as much as we enjoyed performing it. The ITS will be performing a full length play ("Look Who's Talking" by Derek Benfield) from 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> November at the Atalaya Park Hotel.

On a slightly more professional basis the Salon Varietes at Fuengirola has an interesting season. Edward Albee's classic "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" will be performed from 28<sup>th</sup> September until 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Following this the musical, "Oliver", will be staged from 14<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October. And finally "Ladies Night" will be on the stage from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> November...it's risqué, it's raunchy, it's...don't all rush at once, Ladies!!!

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

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## **Annual Tax Reports**

As you may recall the Spanish tax authority (Hacienda) requires an annual tax return to be prepared for each non-resident owner of a property in Spain. This applies to properties owned in a company name, by a married couple (a separate return is required for both husband and wife) or by a partnership of individuals (one report for each partner). Many of you will have arrangements in place with tax specialists or lawyers. However, if you do not, you need to think about what steps you need to take.

Recently former clients sold their apartment. It is standard practice for 3% of the sales price to be withheld by the tax authorities pending payment of any income or wealth tax liability that might be outstanding. Because the clients had not submitted annual tax reports prior to the sale, the refund of the 3% tax has been delayed while they put their affairs in order.

If you do not have any arrangements in place currently, feel free to contact Michael for further information. Our accountant offers this service and his charges are very reasonable when compared to those charged by lawyers.

## **Taxi Meters**

By the end of this year taxis in Marbella will be required to have meters fitted, which will calculate fares according to the distance travelled and the time taken. The meters will be designed to calculate fares both within the municipality itself and for long distance journeys. The new bylaws also require systems to be fitted to allow payment to be made by credit card from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012. The new regulations also specify the dress code for drivers.

## **Spanish Economy**

Many ayuntamientos (local councils) continue to suffer as a consequence the heavy indebtedness incurred over previous years. Apart from substantial cutbacks on services and new capital projects, an estimated 10500 municipal staff in Andalucía have not received their salaries for the past two or three months. Negotiations with staff and councillors to phase payment of arrears and to reduce salary levels are underway in many locations.

## **Parking in the Wrong Place**

The word "grua" has a number of meanings. It can refer to a building crane or the breakdown truck that rescues you and your car at the road side. More frequently, however, it refers to the tow truck that takes your car away when you have parked illegally. The word strikes fear into motorists' hearts. A recent survey has shown that the cost of this service ranges from around 40 € in Nerja up to around 100 € in Benalmádena. The expense does not stop there since you may have to pay additional charges depending on the length of time that the car is in the municipal pound and the time of day the towing takes place.

The moral of the story is to take good care of where you park, observe the notices and do not to copy how the locals abandon their cars on junctions and pedestrian crossings!

That's all for now. I will be back at my desk on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October.

Hasta la vista!

*Beverley*

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