



OUR BUMBLE

EXPLORING EUROPE IN OUR MOTORHOME

BY JOANNE, CRAIG & PEANUT

An aerial photograph of a scenic beach in Spain. The beach is nestled between steep, rocky cliffs and the sea. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, and many people are swimming and wading. On the sandy shore, numerous people are sunbathing on towels or blankets. A small boat is pulled up on the left side of the beach. In the background, white buildings are visible on the cliffs, and mountains rise in the distance under a clear blue sky.

FROM THE SPANISH
MOUNTAINS DOWN
TO THE COSTA DEL
SOL.



LANJARON TO PAMPONEIRA

SUNDAY 26 APRIL

Terrible nights sleep, probably to do with the thoughts of someone potentially hitting the back of Vin and sending us hurtling off a bloody steep cliff. That combined with torrential rain and the thoughts of the waterfall sweeping us off the cliff.

After rinsing the bedding we nipped back to Lanjaron to top up on some lovely jubbly spring water. With everything ready we set off down the winding and very steep road to Olgiva. Oh and guess who we saw in route...El Uno Peg! We both waved and in return he

smiled and showed us his one remaining tooth. Dear old chap, I hope he found the prize goat that he was looking for.

The 11km drive to Olgiva was a bit of a climb but the roads were in good condition. Probably as well as the weather isn't too good today and looks like we are in for some rain later. The mountain valleys and terraces provided plenty good jaw dropping views but it's never quite the same without the sunshine. However, the clouds did wonders for the opposing mountain. It looked very masculine with deep, defined gorges that made them look muscly and moody.



Once in Olgiva we parked up and hung the seat covers in the window in the hope the sun would pop his hat on and shine a few rays on them. We had planned on staying in Olgiva for the day but after 15 minutes we'd had enough and we're making tracks to our next stop. Olgiva is the capital of this region but it didn't have any appeal.

The road continued to wind up and up with some wonderful hairpin bends. I don't often pray but for some reason I seem to chat to God or shout to Jesus the higher up we climb. Today was no exception and at every bend, I silently asked him to clear the roads. I dreaded the thought of another large vehicle crossing our path...definitely not room for two on this road. As we climbed higher the valleys got deeper and more dramatic.

Just as we were approaching Pamponeira we spotted a test car. All covered in cloth, so you couldn't tell the make, model or shape. Whatever it was, it looked rather sporty and once it passed us, it opened up and roared down the mountain pass. We were now driving around Poqueira Gorge, a huge gash in the Sierra Nevada. The views down were stomach churning and the views up...were covered in rain clouds.





We drove the short distance to Pamponeira and parked up. Probably best if we stay here tonight and fingers crossed the sun shines tomorrow and we can get to walk the gorge and appreciate the stunning scenery.

We had a brief walk in to the village before it pissed it down. The houses built in to the terraces of the mountainside, all white washed and closely packed together. The narrow streets all had a central pebble gutter to allow the water from a heavy rainfall to naturally drain away. The village has a number of nice cafes and bars although slightly spoiled by a one to many tourist jarapas (throws) and rug shops.

The rest of the day was spent in Vin as we took shelter from the rain and cold, strong winds. Oh, I nearly forgot, whilst listening to the fireworks in the distance.



Top

Far Left

Left



Mountain top villages here we come.

PAMPONEIRA TO CAPILEIRA

MONDAY 27 APRIL

Last night was a noisy night. We could hear some type of concert or celebration in the village above. We are not sure if it was a wedding, a mini concert or what but by 3am they'd moved on to the Elvis tunes. Every half an hour they would set off fireworks or crackers and boom, it sounded like blinking gun powder exploding in the valley. The torrid rains and gusty winds provided some temporary relief from the music and fireworks. It was an entertaining evening!

We'd parked on a small coach park and as soon as the first coach arrived, we decided to move. Not far just round the corner to the next ledge in the mountain side.

Last night's storm had cleared the air and today the sun was shining bright. After hanging the rest of the bedding out to dry, we took a wee walk in to the village. Craig went in search of some tobacco and whilst he didn't find a tobacconist he did find a vending machine. He was a little hesitant but when the packet arrived he was pleasantly surprised. It was a cigarette packet and inside a pouch of tobacco, some papers and few sticks of filters. How neat for a vending machine. As we to the edge of the village a little ginger and



white cat joined us. It was a playful little thing and it took us in a lovely tour of the



the village terraces and allotments. In return, we gave the tour cat a tickle behind the ears to which he was mighty pleased. By now 4 small coach loads of local Spanish tourist had arrived. Think it is time to move to the next town. We wound up and up until we reached Bubion but unfortunately there was no where to park a lump like Vin, so we went higher up to the next village, Capileira. We found a great spot on the edge of the village overlooking the valley, the gorge and snow capped peaks.

After lunch we strolled around the sleepy little village and what a delight. The houses are very different here to the pueblo blancos region. They are typically stone with flat roof. Due to the steepness of the





village the houses look a bit like dominos - the balcony of one house becomes the roof on the next house down and so on. The roof was supported by wood post called umbrellas and as the roof also acted as a balcony for the next, we wondered if this is were the term umbrella originated from? As we wandered around the tiny lanes we peered through the odd door or window to find some of the houses still had the downstairs for cattle and upstairs as their living quarters. The chimney pots came in all heights but the tops all looked like sombreros. We found a few communal washing areas with old scrubbing boards perfectly located next to a little spring or mini waterfall. The church square was the centre of activity and we are not sure what was going on but crowds of teenagers were chasing 3 lads dressed in rag suits and carrying sticks with straw pouches on the end. The rag lads would pound their sticks at the crowds in an attempt to keep them at bay. Then every so often someone would challenge the rag lads to the ground, a scuffle on the floor and the crowds would roar and cheer. Whatever the tradition, it looked like good fun and kept the village entertained.

As the sunset, we walked up the road behind us. Looking back on the village at sunset with the snow capped mountains and terrace upon terrace of crops was just something else.

Those views extend in all directions, even peanut is having a look and enjoying the sunshine on his little old grey face.





Snow capped mountains year round.

CAPILEIRA TO MOTRIL

TUESDAY 28 APRIL

Today we are going from Sierra del la Sol to costa del Sol - mountain to beach in one day. Today is all about the drive and soaking up the wonderful mountain views and passes. We continued to follow the peaks of the Cordillera Penidetica mountain range with the highest peak of Mulhacen always in view at 11421 ft high. There are 16 peaks in total and the highest peaks remain snow capped all year even though they benefit from the nice warm climate of the Mediterranean. We drove along windy roads that clung to the valleys and mountains just like me butt cheeks clung to the chair. At times, I am sure Craig drives close to the edge to see me squirm. Men do have a cruel sense of humor at times.

Not long and we arrived at our first stop, Trevelez. The highest town on the Spanish peninsular at 4841 feet, sitting on the southern slopes of mount Mulhacen. The town is only small and not much to it but we are here for its piggy! To be precise, white hogs that roam the slopes pigging out on acorns. The village is famous for it Jamon Serrano, which is all prepared here. The hock is rubbed down with course salt and then hung in the drying sheds for at least two years to mature in the cool mountain air. A walk around the factory including watching the master butcher carve a full leg in to portions for sale. We love hams, so nothing for it, we bought a nice lean piece that will last us a good few meals unless I scoff it when Craig's not looking.



For lunch, we headed out the village and down the river, so we could admire the village from afar. Then with full bellies off we set meandering up and down, in and out of the lower valleys. It truly was a wonderful drive with some stunning views. At one point we drove down to 300m above sea level and then within 15 minutes we were back up 1100m. Great for views but not for fuel economy.

After spending all day gawking out the windscreen we arrived on the coast. We'd popped out at Motril and surprise, surprise it had a Lidl. Giddy Craig popped in for a few bits including a bottle of wine and a couple of lagers. On route to the beach we tried out McDonald's wifi but the connection was terrible. Then we got stuck in a traffic jam....what's this a traffic jam in Spain. Not hit a traffic jam since I worked in Manchester, this feels really strange. Then a few cars in front we could see the hold up. An airplane wing. Yep, an airplane wing of all things. Not what you expect to see going around a roundabout. Eventually they carefully got the wing down the road before turning left in to a field. Two minutes later and we were parked up admiring the sea, the sunset and the palm tree.



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Jamoneria, The ham shop we got some goodies from & Motril's beach for the night.



MOTRIL TO NERJA

WEDNESDAY 29 APRIL

Craig, I think we need to move

Why?

Because there are a load of cars parked at the side of us.

Eh?

Yep, 12 learner drivers all anxiously awaiting to take their test and think we might be in there way.

Bloody Hell !

I hope they know what they are doing and don't start off with a blinking bunny hop and prang Vin.

We'd parked on a lovely quiet street at the side of the beach but little did we know it was the driving test street. We set off in search of safety.

The drive along the coastal road was very nice and the little resorts looked quite inviting. Unfortunately there wasn't anywhere to park Vin, so it wasn't until we reached Nerja that we found a parking space. Not the best in the book but just on the edge of town on a



little lump overlooking the main road. We cycled towards the beach in search of a better spot. Not long before we found several spots, one of which was right on the beach. We moved Vin down to the beach and tucked in just behind the garden allotments, perfect. No one could really see us and a hop, skip and jump and we were on the beach. Granted the Costa del Sol doesn't have a great beaches with pebbles and black mica sand but it does have a cracking coastline and backdrop of snow capped mountains. We quite like it here, it is much better than its reputation.

Hello, Hello. An English couple spotted the UK registration plate and came over to ask us about traveling to Spain in our motorhome etc. We had a good chat and convinced them it was a good thing to do...wonder if they will give it a whirl?

Soaking my feet in salt water,
enjoying a glass of vino & typing
this.



Nerja's coastline looking East.

NERJA

THURSDAY 30 APRIL

Today, we chilled on the beach, which feels like a first for us. Craig lasted all of five blinking minutes before he was up and scouring the beach for stones. Jeez Craig sit down.

After lunch we had a nice stroll in to the village. Lots of little bars, restaurants, cafes and tourist shops. But all done is a really nice way. Nerja is a lovely holiday place and it is somewhere I would come back to on a two week holiday. Not often we say that! In the centre of the village the 'balcony of Europe '. A ledge decorated in flowers that juts out to sea providing s great view 360 view.

Despite all my best efforts Craig wouldn't budge when it comes to having our tea out. Looks like I am gonna have to start eating out on my own!

Back in Vin and I soaked my feet in salt water whilst Craig watched an ant and the conversation went something like....

Hey look at this little fella, he's carrying my big toe nail. He is a strong bugger, wonder if he will use as building material or eat it? Then for the next half an hour, I had a running commentary on how the ant went through rough terrane before arriving home. The ant got Craig's seal of approval...maybe he will take the ant out for a celebration meal!



FRIDAY 1 MAY

Beach bum day with not much to say except the Spanish gardens/allotments that back on to the beach got busy. After about 1pm they started to arrive and by 4pm the gardens were full of families enjoying the sunshine and BBQ's!

In the evening, wait for it! We went out for a meal and few drinks. Yep, you heard me right. Craig admitted defeat on the nagging front and after 5 months on the road he finally went out. I couldn't believe it. Craig even put on some nice togs and shoes (as opposed to his crocs that are now welded to his feet). Well we had a truly wonderful evening and would do it all again...tomorrow. To Craig that means we have to wait another 5 months!

SATURDAY 2 MAY

We made mini El Torcal stones from the beach pebbles before setting off to Malaga. The coastal road was great and loads of places to stop off along the way.

Tomorrow, I have to fly home for a couple of weeks but I am hoping Craig will do one of his bumbles. We'll wait and see.....



OLAH

Been a busy week with odd jobs.

1. I found a block of insulation, so i cut it down and shaped it to replace the damaged piece that lined the grey water access panel under the van.
2. The motorhome came with a 'fantastic fan' and they are really good as an extractor but the quality of some of the components are crap. The clips that hold a ventilation panel in place broke months ago and this week the mesh started to come away from the casing. I re-glued the mesh with some pound shop adhesive and fixed the casing to the unit with stainless screws - now it's better than the original one.
3. I sawed 60mm off the deckchair legs, so they would fit in the garage better as they were a little on the awkward side to get out.



OLAH!



OUR TOP 10 PLACES



1. SEVILLE



2. EL CHORRO



3. SALAMANCA



4. EL ROCIO



5. BELEM, LISBON



6. ALVOR



7. MAFRA



8. EVORA



9. MERTOLA



10. LAGOS

OUR HIDDEN GEMS



1. PRAIA DO MARINAH



2. PRAIA DO ARRIFES



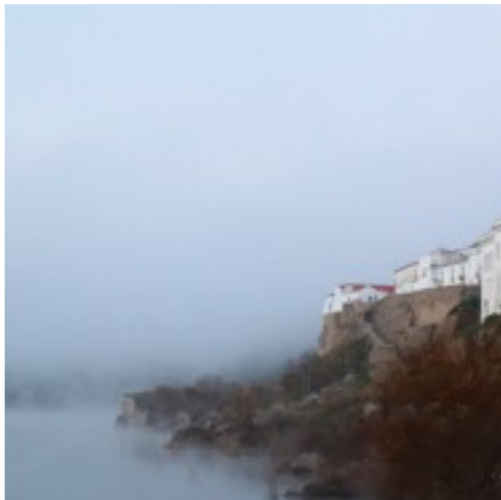
3. PRAIA DO
CARVELHO



4. PRAIA DO
ALMARGEM



5. VILA DO BISPO



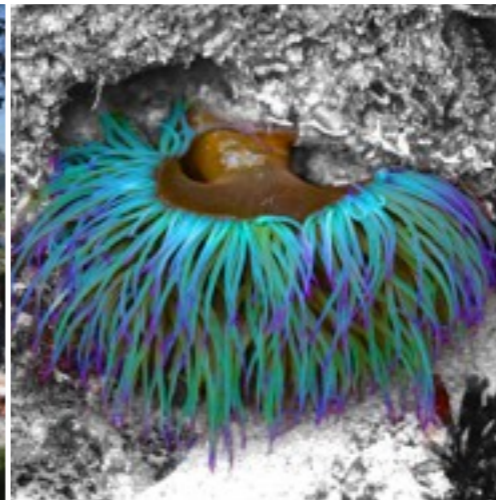
6. MÈRTOLA RIVER
BANK



7. PRAIA DO AMADO



8. MONTEJAQUE



9. PORTO COVO



10. ILHA DO FARO