



# OUR BUMBLE

## EXPLORING EUROPE IN OUR MOTORHOME

BY JOANNE, CRAIG & PEANUT



A man with grey hair, wearing a black t-shirt and blue shorts, is walking away from the camera on a narrow dirt path. The path is surrounded by tall, dry, yellowish-brown grass that is blowing in the wind. The background shows a clear blue sky and more of the grassy hillside.

# <sup>1</sup> SPAIN

CRAIG RETURNING FROM THE DESERT HILLS WITH A FIST  
FULL OF EUROS!





## MALAGA TO TORROX COSTA

### SUNDAY 17 MAY TO THURSDAY 21 MAY

After two weeks of normal UK weather, rain, rain and more rain, it felt good to step off the plane without clutching an umbrella or having my coat hood stick like glue to the side of my face. With 10kg strapped to my back ( I will explain the weight later), my laptop bag, handbag and carrier bag full of dog food and M&M chocolate peanuts, I set off to rejoin the Our Bumble crew. It was a fair jaunt from the plane to the departures drop off point (where Craig is picking me up) and with all the extra hand luggage , I struggled. By the time I met Craig, I looked like something the cat wouldn't drag in. Craig on the other hand looked clean. fresh and smelt divine with a splash of aftershave.

After a quick kiss and cuddle we set off before the security staff moved us on. As we set off, I plonked my feet on the dash and shouted Peanut over but he didn't want to know. In his doggy world, I'd abandoned him for 2 weeks and he was going to teach me a lesson. He stuck his snout in the air, flipped his ears back and snuggled on to his bed.

As we left the airport, I got a lovely warm feeling, a feeling of being home with my gawgus hubby and pampered pooch.

For the next 5 days we stayed in and around Torrox Costa. It's not the best place on the Costa del Sol but you can park without any hassle and the beach is only a hop, skip and jump away. We mainly parked at the side of the Iberostar hotel where it was nice and clean. We had access to fresh water plus somewhere to empty our grey water and the toilet.

Look at these coins we found on the wall at the side of the motorhome. One of them dated 1313?





Craig stopped here last week, so he gave me the run down on the place and all the great restaurants...which I never got to see, surprisingly!



We spent most of the time on the beach looking like typical Brits. Deck chair, swimwear and lots of burnt bits. Well, if I am honest, that's me. Craig was already suntanned. Whilst I'd been in the UK, he'd done nothing but walk up and down the beach, kicking sand and looking for something to do, so he's got an absolute corker of a tan. Me on the other hand, looked pale faced, so nothing for it a few relaxing days on the beach.

We had hoped to spend a day or so with Tony & Ruth (cousin) who have an apartment near Marbella but we just couldn't find anywhere to park the motorhome. Shame really as we were so looking forward to catch up with them.

Peanut got to enjoy his favorite biscuits, soft, meaty Waggs chunks all the way from the UK. Normally he eats lams but as he is getting older his gums prefer something a little softer. For his first treat, I let him have a full Wagg portion, which he scoffed in a nano second. Licking his chops in hope for seconds. I think not little man, these meaty morsels will have



to last you a while. Watching him enjoy them was worth all the huffing and puffing carrying them 2500 km to Spain. After that, I mixed his biscuits, so his soft biscuits go a little further. I also bought Peanut a new squeaky toy, which we've called El Rancid....which it looked after about an hour with Peanut. He loves the toy to bits and won't take it out of his mouth, so it's smelly and rancid...hence the name.

So what did I do when I was back in the UK? As Craig mentioned, I spent most of my first week back and forth to the hospital having lots of tests including unreasonable requests for me to pee for England. Then in the second week, I had to go back for some of the results and start treatment. Back and forth for jabs, which will help eliminate the copper from my body and help my internal bits get back to normal. Plus another course of B12 to boost my energy, which is definitely needed after decorating my sisters' (Mandy) bathroom and office. But most of all, I got to spend some well needed time with my family & friends especially the one and only...mum.

Had a lovely time with my dad tidying up the garden and a great curry with the Sweet Peas. It was great to see Oliver and Lucas, who are growing by the minute both in size and character. Our Lucy has dropped a load of weight and looks fab.

I also got a nice surprise when my other sister, Shikha came over from Southern Ireland for a few days. I met her daughter, Ocea, who is now 18 for the first time and she is the most beautiful person inside and out. The world would certainly be a better place with lots of Ocea's. On their last night, we had a mad half an hour taking loads of photo's as it is not often the 3 of us are all together.



Left to Right: Joanne, Shikha, Mandy & Ocea.

I also got to see my two favorite little girls, Ruby and Freya. My secret agent buddies.

It was Ruby's confirmation day and she looked adorable in her white gown. Freya was the little



cheeky monkey, as always. Who refused to have her photo taken until I suggested she pulled a funny face.







# Juice, Juice and more Juice...

Remember I said my hand luggage was heavy? Well, I have to start green juicing to get the vitamins and minerals I need. We only found this out a couple of days before I flew home, so Craig did an quick but intense review of what juicer I needed to get. We needed something that was good on electricity plus small and compact. Living in a motorhome with a juicer is challenging. We wanted a macerater type but with the limited timescales we could only find the blade type. We opted for a Philips at £59.99 from Curry's. First

impressions - simple, compact and easy to use. Ideal for the motorhome and in terms of juicing, it does a pretty good job.

Every morning, I am having a green juice with my breakfast. Anything that is green, good for the liver and rich in iron like kale, broccoli, spinach and asparagus. I usually mix with a variety of green apples, pears, cucumber, lemon and ginger. At first, I wasn't too sure on the taste but now, I quite them. Its only been a week, so in a couple of weeks I will let you know if I feel any benefit...I hope so...no more itching, please.





## TORROX COSTA TO SALOBREÑA

### FRIDAY 22 MAY

Yippee we are off. We have enjoyed our stay in Torrox but it's now time to move on before Vin grows roots and turns in to a static. After a quick shop at Lidl we hit the highway and headed east. We'd picked out a few potential wild camping spots just in case we couldn't find anything. 40km down the road and we turned off, wound through a little village and popped out in the middle of a load of allotments and farmers fields. The natural bamboo hedges towered over Vin and it was difficult to see the road ahead. It felt like we were in the middle of a bamboo maze. The first wild camping spot turned out to be a heigh restricted car park, so we carried on. Soon we were cruising down the beach promenade of Salbreña. A nice enough place but a bit soulless. We parked up and got out the bikes. Nothing for it, let's go cycle and find a great place to park our butts...half an hour later and we were taking Vin to a little hideaway. In the middle of the bamboo maze, a dirt track lane that took you straight to the beach. Right at the edge of the beach, a small plot of land surrounding in bamboo with a few camper vans. Perfect.

The sun was shining and so were we. The chairs were out and we had a good day chatting about everything and enjoying each other's company. It seems like ages since we had a good chat and a belly laugh!

Peanut was a wee smelly, so we gave him a sunshine bath. He wasn't impressed with the box and much prefers the shower.

In the evening, Craig cooked a lovely meal all swilled down with a nice glass of sangria.





## SATURDAY 23 MAY

It was a tad overcast, so what a good time to have a go at a new bumble template. Or so I thought! Until Craig decided to help and then it went pear shaped. Our perspectives on stuff are completely different and no matter how much we try, we always end up completely frustrated with each other. With an unsuccessful mission, I went for a paddle to kick some waves and Craig washed the paint off Vin.

After lunch, the sun came out and we went for a stroll along the beach. Not many people out and about but we get a feeling this stretch of beach is pretty quiet. There were no hotels or apartments just a few small houses and plenty beach allotments. On the Costa del Sol beach allotments are all the rage. Some with vegetables, some with wonderful gardens and some just full of any old shite. I love the flower gardens, whilst Craig loves the junk yards...no surprise there then.

Back at base we sat out with our stubby chairs. There are about a dozen Motorhomes now parked up and everyone is extremely friendly. It's a lovely little spot and great atmosphere. On one side we have the Swiss couple who now live in Spain - they never speak to each other. On the other, an elderly Spanish couple who are just adorable. We think they must live here because they have created a mini garden outside their door although half the plants are dead...not sure if we should tell them! The best bits, they have a shopping trolley, which they load with empty water containers and then walk an hour to the fountain and fill. The bumpy, dirt track road to the fountain is no easy walk, so got to hand it to them. They have a lovely natured dog who sleeps under the van. Next door but one, a transvestite. On the end a grandma with her 2 year old granddaughter. Opposite, French couple, Spanish father and son in a dump of a Motorhome (needs a bloody good scrub) and then a lovely couple of Dutch people. The Dutch woman is so friendly but mad as a box of frogs, she goes for a swim every day and then tips a bucket of freezing cold water over her head to wash away the salt water. Personally I'd prefer warm water!



Everyone was sat outside and the atmosphere was buzzing. Folk exchanging conversation and then the police arrived. Everyone shut up. Oh no are they gonna kick everyone off? They slowly drove down the middle of all the vans, smiled at everyone and waved before heading back to the main road. What a surprise.

Craig can't sit down for 5 minutes, he is like a jack in a box. One day I am going to nail his arse to the floor, I swear. Imagine the cartoon character the road runner on steroids...that Craig on a quiet day! To occupy his time he scrubbed the bikes and then opened up the barber shop with his mobile hair trimmers. Vidal Sassoon eat your heart out. Our neighbours were fascinated watching Craig trim his bog brush hair (it's that thick), Beats reading the latest hello or doing another crossword.



## SUNDAY 24 MAY

A pretty overcast day and so glad we opted to do our monthly deep clean and big wash. Ideal weather! We spent all day cleaning and washing, in between chatting with our neighbours and watching the world go by. Despite cleaning, it was a really nice day.

Today, is our Russell's birthday and what a better way to remember him than playing a few of his favorite songs whilst cleaning Vin. Only Human by The Killers brought back some happy memories and lots of smiles. Miss you loads Russ xxx

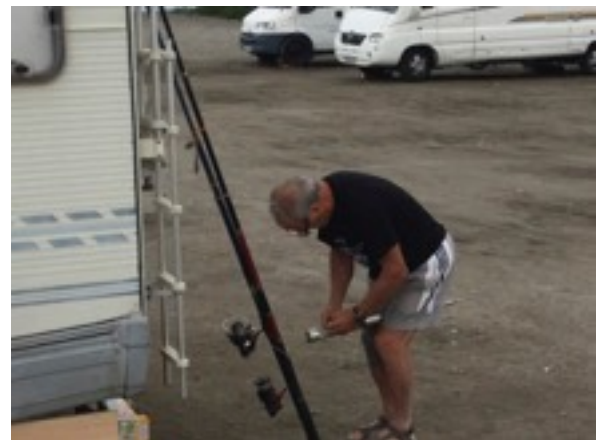
Craig did the washing and he had all the ladies watching him. They were absolutely fascinated with our washing technique and our little spinner. They couldn't believe how good the little spinner was. I felt for the husbands...you could see the women giving them grief, asking them to sort out a spinner for them.



## SALONREÑA TO EL EJIDO

MONDAY 25 MAY

We said cheerio to our neighbours and the got Vin ready for the off. Just as we were leaving we watched our Spanish neighbour drag a massive 1m blue plastic lid from the bin to his motorhome. Wonder what he going to do with that? We stopped and watched. Next minute, his wife was out yelling at him and dragging the piece of junk back to the bin. Bless him, he clearly thought he was doing the right thing. He just looked at her and with his glasses balanced on the end of his nose, he looked up and grinned. Benny Hill eat your heart out.



We stopped on the park near the police station and filled up with water before finding the fuel station and filling up with GPL and a bit of diesel. Of course, no move would be complete without a lidl stop plus I need plenty green vegetables for my juicing, I have none left.

The drive to Calahonda was pretty boring and not much to see. We pulled up on the beach front car park and had a spot of lunch. We had hoped to stay here but the signs clearly stated no Motorhomes anywhere in the village. With tail between our legs but a full belly, we set off.







The coastline was pretty impressive with huge cliff drops right down to the turquoise waters. Lots of little bays and coves that could only be accessed by boat unless of course you are in to rock climbing. As we meandered around the headland we got forced on to the new top road, which is not what we wanted. We wanted the low road or the coastal road. They have recently completed a new road for all the lorries but no signposts. Never mind, we will come off at the next junction or so we thought! It was about 30km before we could turn off! We had missed all our stopping points and then some! Marg the Tom Tom went in to robot mode and lost her bearings. Seems like today is one of those days, folks.

As we pulled off we headed towards the coast and towards Almeria. It was rather grubby and not very attractive at all.

The place felt really bazaar and as Craig said "I just don't get it". It was dead as a door nail with not a soul around but apartment blocks everywhere. Then we hit poly tunnel hell and all we could see for miles upon miles were plastic tunnels full of tomatoes and fruit. Eventually, we hit a reasonable bit i.e. not a shit hole. Not ideal but somewhere to park for the night albeit in the middle of a villa / housing estate.

We had a cycle to the beach area, which wasn't that great. The whole day felt weird and this place is just one strange place. As far as the eye can see are poly tunnels and if you have a plastic fetish then El Ejido is place to be. Personally, it's not our cut of tea plus there are tons of flies but guess that's cause of all the rotting fruit and sweaty plants.







## EL EDIJO TO TABERNAS

## VIA ADRA & ALMERIA

### TUESDAY 26 MAY

Craig had a fart around on the iPad to see if he could get the Internet connection to go any faster. On the MacBook the download speed is fine, it's just the iPad. He scratched his head and tried all sorts of stuff but in the end he did a complete back up and reboot. Oh no, it wiped out all the copilot (navigation app) maps. That's 4gb of data we will need to download and with tortoise speed internet. Wonderful. Think we will leave that for another day.

By the time we set off, it was nearly lunchtime. We headed towards Adra, a small holiday resort just before Almeria. As we entered the town a big notice saying no Motorhomes. Blinking ek, this part of Spain doesn't want any Motorhomes! After a whistle stop tour of the fabricated golf and spa resort we headed to....wait for it....McDonald's. How exciting. A day at McDonald's hoping for some free and fast wifi. Maybe Craig will splash out on a 99c cheese burger. Not today Jose! With no map data and no cheese burger I sighed. Nothing for it, I cracked an egg or two and made us scrambled eggs on toast.

We set off again in hope Almeria would have somewhere for us to stay. 30km down the road and Almeria looked a wonderful refreshing change after miles of



plastic white tunnels. We drove to the aire at the port. Umm not there anymore. We had a quick glance up the side streets but they looked pretty narrow. The alcazaba (fortress) dates back to 995AD and it is huge. Perched right on top the headland overlooking the town. We wound up and down and finally found a spot near the alcazaba but by god it looked dodgy. The Bronx





of Almeria or should I say La Chanca, the gypsy quartets with shady looking characters peering from behind the curtains. It just did not feel safe. In front of us, hundreds of shoes thrown over an electricity cable. I think these are the folk who used to live in the caves but the local council built them colourful boxy type apartments. We wanted to stay in Almeria for a few days but not at the detriment of losing our home!



Five minutes later and we were traveling over weird and wonderful rock formations. Heading towards the desert in search of an oasis. Stuff the oasis, a camping spot will do! We chuckled at each other wondering if the Spanish authorities have put no camping signs in the middle of the desert. At the end of the road, we found a sign saying oasis, how weird is that...we look for an oasis and we find one. Not quite the oasis you'd imagine but tune in tomorrow and you will find out more...Clint!

In the early evening light, we trundled off up and down the desert hills, admiring the landscape in between acting daft, which included Craig leaving me on the edge of a cliff knowing full well I wouldn't be able to move without him as I hate heights. Peanut on the other hand enjoyed his first venture in to Europe's only desert, where he climbed a mini sand mound just perfect for a mini dachshund.



# Sergio Leone

## PRESENTS

# THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE BUMBLE

**WEDNESDAY 27 MAY**

We are parked at Mini Hollywood, the home of the spaghetti westerns. The film set built in the 1960's is famous for the good, the bad and the ugly starring Mr Clint Eastwood. Other films shot here include a Fist Full of Dollars, Indiana Jones and Lawrence of Arabia. Craig is an fan of Westerns, so he is in his element. The desert or badlands as they are named are still used today for commercial, so it is not usual to spot mini film crews in and around the area. Back in the 60's they used local gypsies (probably the ones that scared us out of Almeria) as Indians and Mexicans in the low budget Wild West films. By the way, that is me at the bottom of this page leaning on the sign.

Up bright and early, so we could get some western action. We paid our entrance fee of €22.50 and strutted back in time. In between the parrot show, the can can and the

# MiniHollywood







western show we walked around the film set, the zoo, the cactus garden and the reptile house.

The western sets were pretty good and in many of the buildings you could walk inside. The saloon was still operating as a saloon with beer on tap just updated with a typical theme park food menu. As we walked around the set, the music of the wild west bellowed out of the speakers. Craig's little head bobbed all the way to the tunes of the west with a to-da-la-do every so often. In the middle of the set the watering station with a few actors on horse back offering visitors a ride in the carriages. When the Can Can girls weren't kicking their legs they were sat under the verandah and chatting to visitors. The place was pretty quiet with only a dozen or so people, so no mad rush or fight to get round the place. Once we'd had our fill of the film set, we strolled through the cactus park before dashing off for the parrot show. Like two big buffoons we sat watching a bloody parrot show in the middle of a half a dozen families. I wouldn't bother but parrot shows are even our thing. Poor bloody Polly just wanted to nibble the trainer for more nuts!

Next we had a walk around the animal park. It was pretty big and much bigger than we expected. To be honest, we didn't expect to find a zoo! It even had a little train for everyone to ride around the animal world. All things considered the zoo and the animals were in good condition with plenty of space to roam about.







The modern reptile house seemed out of place with the rest of the rather dated and dusty park. Inside the reptiles were well maintained and a good variety. Craig took a shine to the tree frogs.

The park also offered a swimming pool area with loungers and sun beds. We did consider grabbing our swimwear but the pool water was a tad on the cool side.

For lunch, we went back to Vin. This way we could also let Peanut out for a pickle and some fresh air. The good thing with the ticket, it lasts all day and you can come and go at your leisure, which makes things a little easier when you have an owd dog and a motorhome.

The park was much bigger than expected and it took us a few hours to walk around. All in all it wasn't bad but it wasn't great but we did have fun playing Clint Eastwood for the day.

In the late afternoon, we set off across the desert. Rugged hills, dried river beds and plenty cacti. Ten minutes later and we'd parked up at the town of Tabernas. We found a great spot near the municipal swimming pool until Craig spotted the bar around the corner, so we moved a few streets down on to a nice big car park.

A quick walk around to find this sleepy town didn't have much to offer other than the fortress and a ladies choir. Yip, a choir. The ladies sang the most beautiful hymns and songs all evening. You could hear them through the village, it was refreshing change from The Script.

For dinner, Craig made a cracking chicken curry. We can't buy curry like we do at home..in a jar or from the Indian takeaway, so we had to make it from scratch and have to say, it was dam tasty. Probably the best curry I've had in a long time. He also made fresh nan. By the time we'd finished we were both stuffed to the point of popping.











## TABERNAS TO NIJAR

### THURSDAY 28 MAY

We didn't wake until 9 am, which is very unusual for us. Must be all this desert air and running around like Clint Eastwood. When we did climb out of our pit the car park was full of young mums taking their children to school. As they walked passed Vin they looked up rather perplexed as to why a Motorhome was parked in their car park. Next minute, the tannoy kicked in and bellowed out some classical tune. Certainly a good welcoming tune for school and much better than some bossy teacher screaming 'come on'.

After a breakfast we did a spot of washing, well we put the washer box on, so to speak and set off. Our next stop, Sorbas. Only 10km down the road but a nice place for walk and some lunch. Before we went exploring we rinsed the clothes and put them in the windscreen to dry. With this desert heat it shouldn't take too long. The village is built around the Rio de Agua's or water river but bizarrely, it has no water, it's a dry river bed. The village doesn't have a lot to see but it has a nice 16 century church, a pretty plaza and great elevated views of the surrounding hills and desert (photo above).



Back in Vin and the clothes hadn't quite dried, so we opened the doors for a final blast of desert air! Yip that did the trick and half an hour later everything was dried and in the wardrobe. We'd also washed the lightweight blanket, as it is now too hot for the duvet, so we got a blanket that we can just throw over if





it gets a little chilly in the night.

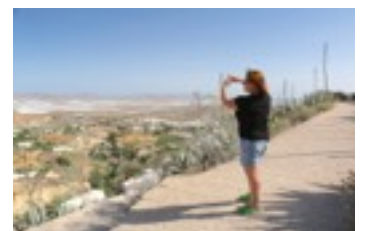
The road to Nijar was lovely (except for the bum turn we did) with great views over the natural park. Marg the Tom Tom has got a cold or needs her adenoids sorting out. Hope it's not contagious otherwise she will be ditched for Frank.

In Nijar, we parked up on the municipal car park which great view over the town and up towards the ruined tower. A lovely walk in to town where wandered in to the church, town square, the water museum, up to the ruined tower and then down the high street. The walk up to the tower provided rewarding panoramic views over Nijar and on route we got to see loads aloe vera flowers that looked like huge asparagus.. The water museum was a little strange but it did provide a nice fountain. In town, we browsed the pottery shops and debated what pots we liked but then decided we have no where to put them. Plus more than likely will brake in transit. On the way back, I disappeared on to a wonder clothes shop and dreamt of buying the shop or better still telling Avi to sell all this gear. Craig on the other hand slipped in to a Spar for a bottle of wine and a chocolate bar. I wonder who will have what? Can you guess?



Dinner, homemade ham and pineapple pizza with the last nights left over bread dough. It was yuck but don't worry, I still have the chocolate bar that Craig bought from the Spar.

Look what we have to look forward to tomorrow...dreaded poly tunnels but we have a gut feeling that just after poly hell their is a hidden gem...find out next week.







Last week we switched the data providers we use for most of our internet access. We moved from Europa SIM to 3 Mobile.

The 3 mobile data SIM is 10GB for £15 per month with a 30 day rolling contract. You can use it in lots of European countries at no extra cost. This is more than ample data for us plus we can access the internet at any time like check weather and research information. The downside, it is painfully slow. Remember dial up days!

We still have the Europa SIM, if needed. This card gives you 500 MB for €3 per day. It is significantly faster but it's too expensive to use every day. If we do need more data and fast then we will use the Europa SIM. The downside to the Europa Sim is it only fits in our MiFi gizmo and not the iPad, so



it also makes it less portable and convenient.

When Joanne went home I asked her to bring back one of my diving clips, the idea was it would be used to clip the shower hose together to stop it swinging around whilst we are driving. Sadly she forgot/lost it (typical) so I had to improvise a little. I found a knackered folding deck chair and removed the little plastic feet that wrap around the tubing. Tied two together with some black bungee and Voila! One make shift hose connector for the shower hose.

Also when she broke the door retainer the other week I had previously found a rubber diaphragm off god only knows what on the floor and kept it thinking "that could be useful". I just folded it in half and pushed into the retainer, being rubber it stays in and also grips the door when it's open.

Hasta La Vista Babies... or till next time! (In a really bad accent)





**WE ARE  
HERE ISH!**

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3



**DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS BANDITO?**



**WE FOUND HIM IN THE WILD WEST AUDITIONING  
FOR THE PART OF A MEXICAN OUTLAW.**