



BUYING AND TOURING IN SPAIN

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SIAL 2007



“The growth and development of inland Almeria is a crucial step towards creating a well-balanced province”

Year in and year out, the Almeria Provincial Tourist Board invests enormous energy in promoting the province.

Their efforts also have a significant impact on the development of residential tourism, an aspect which board president José Añez values highly for its role in bringing the inland areas to life, “something which is a crucial step towards creating a well-balanced province”.

How important do you consider residential tourism to be?

The importance of residential tourism is that it underlines that Almeria gives visitors more options apart from staying in the many hotels and inns on offer all over the province. The exceptional climate makes it particularly attractive and the steady improvement in transport communications has benefited the whole sector.

How significant is this type of tourism in Almeria province?

The province of Almeria has long been, and still is, a highly popular destination for European visitors. This has made the tourist sector one of the main motors behind Almeria's economic development.

In recent years, the growth in tourism has begun to impact on some of our inland areas, which is vital if the whole province is to develop in a balanced way.

Almeria is well-known as the East Coast province with the most English settlement. Why do you think that there are relatively few other foreign nationals? Are we doing anything about this?

That so many English settle in Almeria is due mainly to its easy accessibility by air. In my opinion, we should maintain our current levels of advertising abroad, with the active support



of Almeria County Council via its Tourist Board. We should pay particular attention to the people of north and central Europe, who are all potential visitors, without forgetting the southern Europeans who are attracted to our common cultural heritage and environment.

Campaigns

What promotional campaigns has the Tourist Board planned for this year? Can you give us a sneak preview?

Every year the Provincial Tourist Board puts together an annual Publicity Schedule, in which we plan out participation in tourist trade fairs in the main source countries, publicity campaigns through advertising, open days where we lay out Almeria's attractions to tour operators and travel agents – a wide range of activities promoting the Costa de Almería's excellence as a tourist destination. Our attendance at trade fairs and our promotional work in general take place under the banner

of Turismo Andaluz, the Andalusian Tourist Authority, and so we have to tailor our annual plan to fit in with theirs.

Do any of your scheduled programmes particularly target residential tourism?

All the Tourist Board's activities have the single aim of promoting the wonders of Almeria as a tourist destination – our fantastic climate, our beaches, our landscape: all attractions that tourists are looking to enjoy and which they will find here. This perfect fit between supply and demand benefits all market sectors, including residential tourism

If you had the choice, what kind of tourist would you try to encourage to establish their second home in Almeria?

We are interested in them all. But, of course, our campaigns are likely to get an especially positive response in countries with which we have particularly good transport communications, such as England and Germany.

To what extent could poor air transport communications be putting a brake on Almeria's growth as a tourist destination?

It is vital for a tourist destination to be wellconnected in transport terms, simply to make it easier to get there. A new airline has just started flights to Almeria, which has had the effect of forcing down prices and which will not only benefit our main tourist market, the Spanish, but which will also be a big plus in the international market.

The growth in residential tourism is being linked to the building of new golf courses. Do your promotion campaigns reflect this?

The aim of Tourist Board advertising campaigns is always to highlight whatever attractions Almeria has to offer as a wonderful tourist destination. The golf courses in Almeria have got together with the Board to establish a new brand, Costa de Almería Golf, which must of course be well-publicised and promoted: this type of tourism is extremely important, as we can see in other areas where it is already well-established.

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ALMERIA PROVINCE

Almería enjoys the most stable temperatures in all Spain, with a steady 19°C providing a warm subtropical climate. It also has the country's longest stretch of coastline, with many secluded Mediterranean beaches, ruins and dramatic rock formations. Inland to Vera, Bédar, Sorbas and Huércal Overa, there are pretty mountain villages, cave complexes and wide desert-like plains.

Excellent road and rail links exist to the national transport network, and all the main population centres are within an hour's drive from Almería airport, and just two from those of Alicante and Murcia.

Whether your tastes run to wildlife watching in the countryside, walking in the Sierras, enjoying the beach and water sports facilities, or a relaxing game of golf on one of many courses – you can find it here.

CABO DE GATA



The Natural Park of Cabo de Gata falls within the municipality of Níjar. Within the Park are a number of villages and small towns. The Níjar region has a relatively small population, but the inhabitants are spread over such a wide area (600km²) that it is one of the largest municipalities in Spain. The area is well worth a visit if you are interested in wildlife but it is also a wonderful place for simply taking in the beauty of the area. Expect to see dramatic coastlines of steep cliffs or rolling dunes; secluded beaches and sleepy fishing villages and a great deal of evidence of the area's varied past – from Moorish castles to British gold mining towns.

SORBAS



Sorbas is a pretty mountain village in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada and famous for both its spectacular setting, high above a deep gorge, and for its attractive ceramics. The town has many historic buildings, including the sixteenth-century Iglesia de Santa María, the theatre, and the houses of the Duke of Alba, the Duke of Valoig, and the Marqués de Carpio. These were the old family homes of these aristocrats and were built in sober Castilian style. The casas colgadas, or 'hanging houses,' that appear to be glued to the sides of the deep gorge on which Sorbas is built are also well worth a look. Close by, at Karst en Yesos are the Cuevas de Sorbas, a network of spectacular interconnected gypsum caves reaching depths of 12km.

MOJACAR

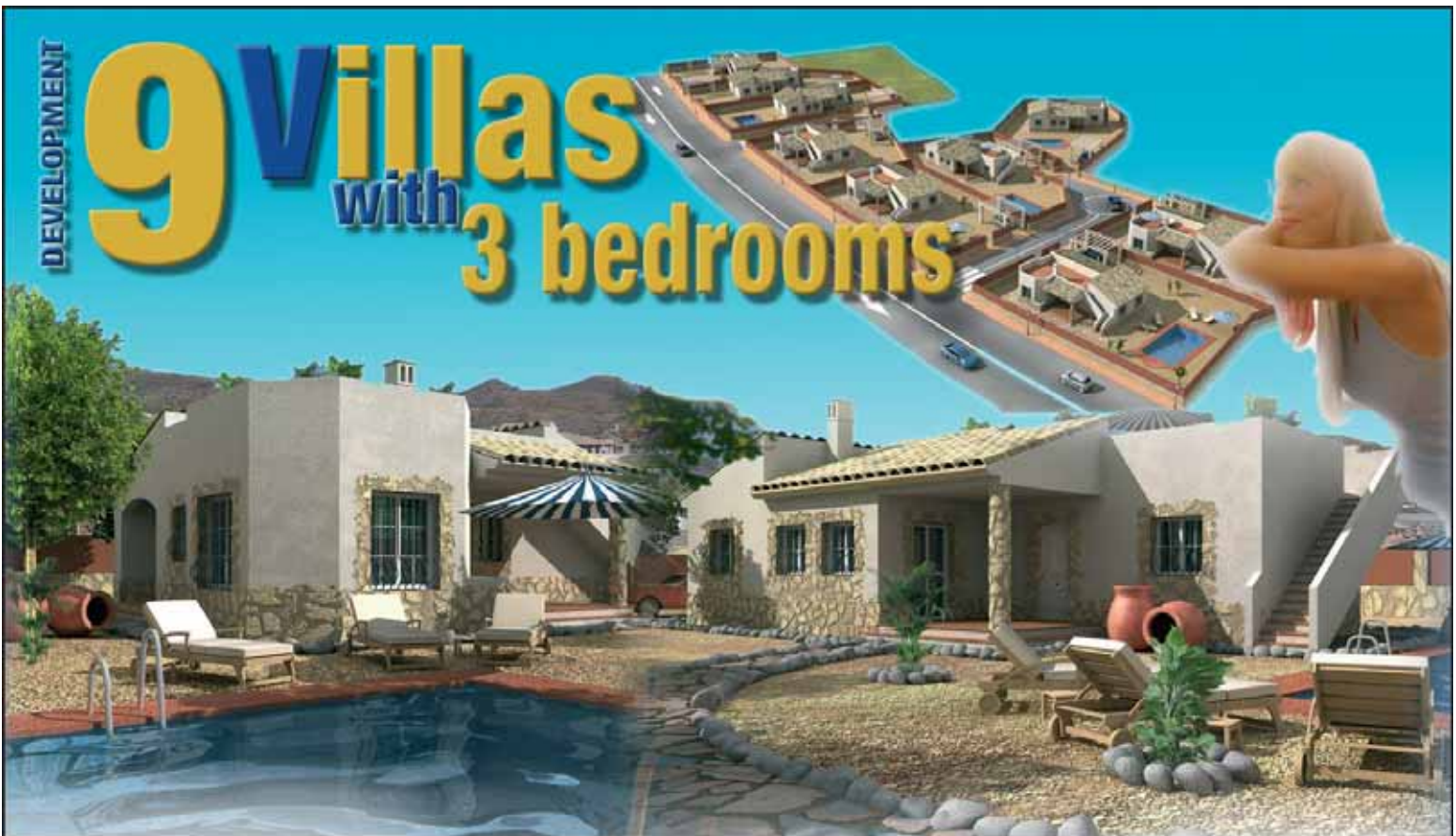


Perched on a hilltop overlooking the Mediterranean, the stunning, white village of Mojácar is not navigable by car, it is necessary to enjoy the enchantment of its medieval Arab architecture on foot. From the Castle, the highest point of the town, the views are spectacular. From the 16th century church of Santa María, stone stairs descend to the Plaza del Parterre, the old Arab cemetery, calle Enmedio, which roughly follows the line of the original city walls, and the Plaza del Ayuntamiento with its centuries-old tree, brought from the Americas by an emigrant. The old city gate with its half-point arch and arms, dates from 1574. Next to the arch, the Casa del Torreón, now a guesthouse, was the original tax collection building for merchants entering and leaving the city.

LOS GALLARDOS



Los Gallardos is located in the lower Almanzora valley about 73 kilometres from Almería by motorway and bound by the Bédar mountains to the south and the Río Aguas to the east. The countryside around Los Gallardos is extremely attractive and the dry river bed is a popular location for walking, cycling, climbing and horseriding. Following the course of the Río Aguas inland brings you to the natural park of Karst en Yesos near Sorbas. Nearby in Alfaix, are the remains of the Arab baths of Aneal which, in their time, attracted many people to the area.



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a to z Spain



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GARRUCHA

Garrucha is one of the smallest towns in Spain, covering only 7.6km². White Macael marble balustrades line the esplanade which runs for almost 2km beside a beach of soft sand and palm trees. Garrucha has three ports; a leisure marina, the fishing port and a commercial docks. Well before dawn, fishing boats leave the port and head out to sea, returning with fish and seafood that is quickly dispatched for auction at the 'Lonja.' It's worth a visit to this busy market just to experience the atmosphere, as restaurant owners and fishmongers bid for the best of the catch. Garrucha prawns, which are only found on this part of the coast, are famous throughout Spain for their great flavour and about 200,000 kilos are caught each year.

VERA

Once famous for its Arab and Phoenician-style pottery and ceramics, Vera is now the main market town of the area and its centre of local government. The Saturday morning market is popular for its locally-grown fruit and vegetables, clothes and cookware. There is a museum of local history within the town council buildings. It has exhibits relating to the different civilizations who have settled in the area throughout the centuries, such as the Argars and the Romans. The bullring, constructed in 1879 at the height of Vera's prosperity, is the oldest in Almería. Vera is undergoing extensive development of its tourist industry. Hotels, holiday homes and residential urbanisations in the areas of Puerto Rey, Pueblo Laguna, Las Marinas and the Playazo beach have meant Vera has expanded out to, and along the coast.

TURRE

Turre is an agricultural town set back from the sea and to the west of Mojácar. The local cuisine is highly-regarded and best known for its strongly-flavoured local stews - gurulllos, olla de trigo and pelotas - and for dishes such as migas, caracoles (snails), fritaila and ajo colorao (a fish, potato and paprika dish). Just beyond the town is Sierra Cabrera, a development built as a quasi-Moorish settlement and now largely settled by immigrant homeowners. Part of the development, which has fantastic views of the surrounding countryside, includes the 9-hole Cortijo Grande golf course, the first of many to be built in the area.

HUERCAL OVERA

Huércal-Overa is the second-largest town of the province (after Almería city). The town is renowned for its fertile plains and its good luck in resisting bad weather, plagues and earthquakes. These days, the town is more famous for its Holy Week processions and as an agricultural centre for the cultivation of oranges, almonds, potatoes, lettuces, alfalfa and esparto. It's also where you'll find the nearest district hospital.

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BÉDAR

CASA COLINA

Ten minutes from Bedar, set in 5,000 square metres of rural land, this single-story villa boasts three large, airy bedrooms (two double, one single), two bathrooms, modern kitchen, large lounge, a dining room with panoramic views, a sun-room and a rooftop solarium, swimming pool and terraces. There is an integral garage and a large, under-house, storage area. The property has a telephone, ADSL, and satellite television installed. The views of the local village, sea and mountains are quite breathtaking.

The garden has been designed to be virtually maintenance-free and there is plenty of parking space. The north-facing house, set into a mountain, is very sheltered and cool in summer, while a wood-burning stove creates a warm and snug home in winter.

Price: 450,000€ /GBP300,000



BÉDAR

CASA LAS MAJADAS

With 10,000 sq. Metres of rural land, this luxury villa features five bedrooms (two with fitted wardrobes), two bathrooms, a lounge/dining room with log-burning stove, modern fitted kitchen, utility room, and cloakroom. The property is equipped with central heating, double glazing, telephone, ADSL, satellite TV, many terraces, a heated swimming pool, log cabin and pond. Spectacular mountain and sea views. Fully furnished.

Price: 625,000€ /GBP418,000



MOJÁCAR

MOJACAR BEACH

174 sq. metres constructed on a 1,050 sq. metres plot in a quiet, residential area. This immaculate villa comprises two large double bedrooms, with en-suite bathrooms and fitted wardrobes, a third bedroom/study, fitted kitchen with gas hob and electric oven, utility room, study and cloakroom. The property benefits from air-conditioning, heating, alarm system, Sky television and fitted telephone points. Mountain and sea views, garden with seven terraces, pool, BBQ area, garage and storeroom.

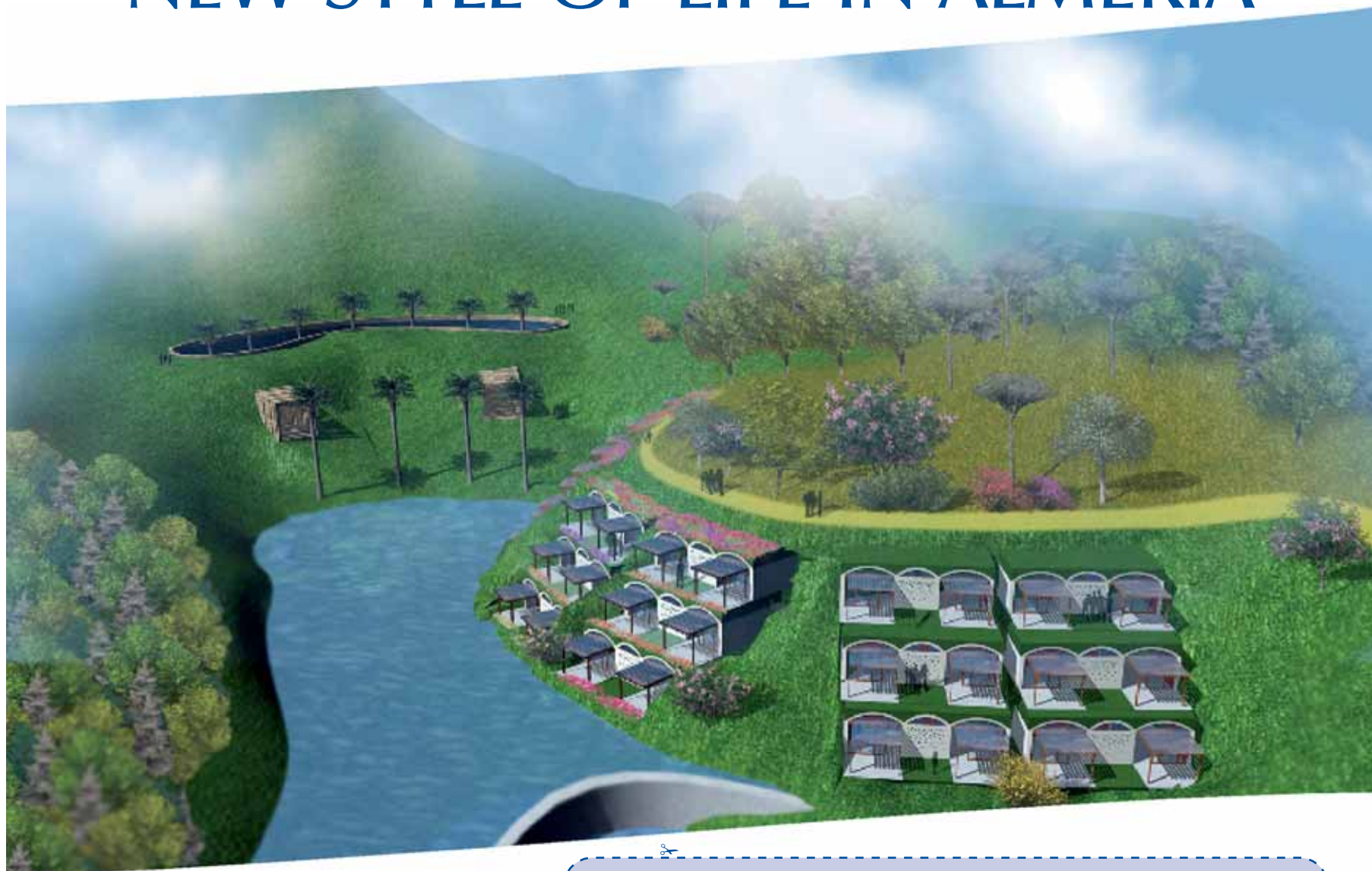
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Los Gallardos

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