

## Otivar - An adventure in the Andalucian mountains!

We leave the highway past Malaga to Almuñecar. Just before Herradura open coast in a large bay. The view is breathtaking. We turn, however, by the mountains towering up probably two thousand meters. The road winds through the landscape slowly up with millions curves. Along the way are orchards of oranges, avocados, etc.

On the narrow road is slow through the hairpin curves. One or other local people will on two wheels, yes maybe not but perceive it that way, through the corners. We are going to the village Otivar through Jete



We take off at the sign that shows down to the center of the village. On the narrow streets we was stopped and two cars that backs up. A little puzzled, but the car in front of us drives down so we follow. We regret the decision soon but now there is no turning back. It is so narrow that we must retract mirrors and have guard on each side of the car. We call our host. Just park on Plaza de Andalucia, I will help you. A Square? It can accommodate four cars. When Mercedes come she tells us that someone has dug up the street further down so we cannot drive any longer and the cars have to go back the same way. Wow!! Which ordeal. Although the mirror was inset it was scraped. We drove back with a man on each side and directed. When we checked the road work, it turned out that it was a flooded stream bed which we had been able to cross with speed, or so it was described by the brave men who inspected the crossing.

The house we had rented in this hilly village had four planes and probably the result of several mergers. Charming but not a right angle and decorated in Andalusian style with dark sturdy furniture. Outside this was not many souls, we eight were probably fifty percent of the population we felt. Some small round old women who with big eyes looking at the tourists. On the village's bar is small round men with hats who drinks café solo. Three boys playing with a ball on the church parking. Thats it. We install ourselves in the house after been



carrying all baggage and food down the steep narrow streets. Two floors with bedrooms, roof terrace and then at the bottom of a TV room. The dining room is then another floor down the stairs on the outside and if you want to take a dip in the pool it will be to take another flight down to sunbathe and pool. Many stairs it is! All houses in the village looks like this, narrow and tall.

The October evening is cool. The scents from flowers come with the weak evening wind. The sun shines on the mountains with its yellow glow before it goes to bed. We serve a buffet and enjoy the Andalusian night. A dog barking is heard in the distance, otherwise it is completely silent. We put our heads on the pillow and fall asleep.



The morning sun casts its rays in through the bedroom window. It's a little wet dew in the garden. The heat of the morning sun dries droplets of water. We have breakfast overlooking the mountains and hundreds of orchards in the valley. What a lovely start to the day.

On with comfortable hiking shoes and we try to find our route. After a few hundred meters we find such a description, even if it is difficult to see

where we are and where the trail begins. After some wandering around, we find a sign and continue up the mountain.

And up it goes. Winding steep through bushes. The substrate is a narrow cemented road so from that perspective, that's fine. We stop every now and then in the shade to catch our breath and drink water. The view is mile

expanse of the valley down to the Mediterranean. We will go about 6 kilometers. Eventually, after we hesitated about where the trail a few times, we find a path that we must follow. Vegetation change from bushes to cultivation of olives, mangoes, avocados, oranges and more. The trail start to bring us downwards and we can find a shady spot above a mango cultivation. The heat has meant that we have not been so hungry but when we sit down in the shade and takes out the sandwiches, they slip down with speed. Under us hangs mangoes on the trees and we see a farmer further on. Could he sell us some mangoes? Welcome to my garden, join me and have a taste of my different types of mangoes.





Under a tree are boxes of ripe mango. Our Spanish host cut up fruit and let us taste. What flavor and juiciness. Take as much as you want, and I do not want any payment, even though we are trying to put money in his pockets. A Spanish kindness that we so often encounter here in Andalusia.

With new energy it bears down to Otivar with speed. We meet a toothless happy man with his donkey and dog riding on it. He gets a kiss on the cheek of one of the participants, it saved his day.

We stopped at the Parada Bar in the village - a large beer for all of us, thank you! Back home, we take a little siesta, it is exhausting to walk, a swim in the pool and drink some cold water in the afternoon sun.

Once the sun has settled we march under the starry sky through the village's narrow streets to enjoy the restaurant's specialties, roasted lamb and chicken cooked over low heat. The meat just falls off the bones. On the way home we pass the village's only hot spot on a Saturday night. About twenty villagers follow us with great interest as we pass. The summer night is still young, so we enjoy even an hour or two of a few glasses of wine.



The next day we eat brunch. A little cleaning, so we set off for home. We stop in Nerja for a cup of coffee. This Sunday there is walk race through the central parts of the city. We enjoy the view on the Balcon de Europa, looking down at the "Islands" with its blue-green water is incredibly beautiful. We hasten, however, home to Marbella.

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