

# ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR VISITORS TO ALBAYALDE

**Welcome to Albayalde.** The enclosed information should help you enjoy your visit to Albayalde and to the Costa del Sol and assist you in making the most of the local amenities. If you have been here before you need read no further! The Community is managed by a Governing Body; their representative can be contacted on (0034) 626060845. However, should you experience any problems with your accommodation; these should be taken initially to your Rental Agent or Representative. Please ensure that you take your keys with you when you leave the house, even for a short period, as the wind may blow your door shut and lock you out. You should shut all windows, lock all doors and take the Urbanisation gate key with you when you leave the Urbanisation. If you do not have a magnetic key for the vehicle barrier, you can purchase one quite cheaply from Reception or, alternatively, if you have a mobile or landline phone (inc. UK based) arrangements can be made with the Security Manager or Webmaster to operate the barrier via your phone (your call will not be charged when using this facility).

**CAR PARKING.** Parking of one car is permitted in front of your house but please take care to avoid blocking garage accesses particularly garages opposite you. In high season parking by the kerb is not permitted but you can park in, or in the entrance to, your garage. If you have more than one vehicle additional parking is available in front of the Commercial Centre by the main entrance. The speed limit in the Urbanisation is 10 Km. per hour.

**ELECTRIC SOCKETS.** Although the voltage is the same as UK (230v, 50 Hz) the wall sockets are not. Adaptors can be bought quite cheaply in Supermarkets. All sockets are wired through a sensitive RCD trip switch in the mains consumer unit by the front door. In the event of a trip return the switch to the UP position. Houses in Albayalde are typically supplied with 25 amp. or 32 amp. electricity supplies. This is probably less than your supply at home so, if the main breaker or RCD keeps tripping, switch off some appliances you are not using at the time (water heaters, air conditioning etc.) and try again. If the supply continues to trip, consult your agent. Note that there are two types of socket in the houses; the 'deep' earthed sockets are for heavy current (15 amp.) appliances such as heaters and the 'shallow' sockets are for lower power (5 amp.) appliances such as TVs, electric shavers, hair dryer, battery chargers etc. The lighting also comes off this 5 amp. supply. Please switch off air-conditioning, electric fans and heaters when you are not in the house.

**DOMESTIC REFUSE.** There are public bins, which are emptied daily, by the entrance to the Commercial Centre in Calle Frigata and just outside Calle Mesana gate. Please dispose of your refuse daily in these bins. This will prevent food smells and a build up of flies or ants in the houses. Do not dispose of domestic refuse in the street litterbins within the Urbanisation.

**DOMESTIC WATER.** Tap water from the mains supply is safe, but can not be guaranteed perfect, for drinking. Large bottles of drinking water are readily available from food stores. Hot water within the houses comes from a number of electric immersion heaters so be careful not to scold yourself. The distribution of tanks should ensure that there is always plenty of hot water for washing machines, baths etc.

**SECURITY.** You are advised to take particular care with cash (inc. travellers' cheques), passports, return air tickets and valuables. Do not leave them by open windows or unoccupied rooms visible from outside. The Urbanisation employs security staff as a deterrent to casual theft. While crime on the Costa is not as serious a problem as in many other areas of Europe, it is a sad fact that some see tourists as attractive targets. Be careful in congested areas such as street markets and supermarket car parks, it has been known for criminals to work in pairs; one distracts you while an accomplice rifles your car and pick pocketing and handbag snatching are not uncommon in markets. If you take normal, sensible precautions as you would at home you should not have any problems but if you wish to report a theft, for an insurance claim for example, the Police have introduced a simple procedure: Phone 902 102 112 between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. and report over the phone in your native language nominating a local National Police Station (Estepona?) where you go within 48 hours to sign and receive a police report, with crime number, which will be required with your claim when you return home.

**FIRE PRECAUTIONS.** The risk of fire is no greater in Spain than in your home town but you are probably in a strange house. On arrival familiarize yourself with the layout and note the exit routes, including via the balconies. Ensure cigarettes are properly extinguished in appropriate ashtrays and never smoke in bed. Turn off all electrical appliances before leaving the house and take particular care when using frying oil. Should you be unfortunate enough to discover a fire evacuate the room and get everyone out of the house, closing all doors and windows if this is possible without taking personal risk. Do not run or stop to collect personal belongings and do not re-enter the property until it is safe to do so. Remain in the vicinity to brief the emergency services. The emergency phone number is 112.

**SWIMMING POOLS.** There are five pool complexes on the Urbanisation, most with a pool dedicated for children. The pools can be used from 11.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. but please do not use them, or make a noise, between 3.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m.; this is siesta time when people like to rest in the heat of the afternoon. Young children should not be allowed in the pool areas unsupervised. Note that use of the pools after 9 p.m. is very dangerous and you will not be covered by your holiday insurance as you are in flagrant breach of Community rules. Please do not take food or drink into the enclosures and remember to shower before entering the pools. The Community pools were upgraded to the latest standard required by the Local Authorities in early 2004. Lilos and other larger inflatables must not be taken into the pools. If you prefer it there is a larger pool in Paco's/MacDonald's Bar Restaurant by the Mesana Gate where sun loungers, snacks and drinks are available, there may be a charge to use these facilities. The pool by the beach is for Villacana owners and clients only. Note that dogs are NOT permitted in the Community gardens.

**NOISE IN THE COMMUNITY.** Houses in Albayalde are single brick construction, thus noise carries more than in double walled properties common in northern European. Please ensure that you, and your pets if you bring them, do not make excessive noise as this can upset your neighbours, particularly at night. The marble floors, while beautiful to look at, act as a sounding board if you drag furniture over them, or use studded footwear. The rectangular architecture of the individual blocks cause loud conversation to echo, so please consider others when you are discussing your night out on the town on your balcony when you return home in the small hours of the

morning; some residents have to work the following day, and we all need some sleep!

**BEACH.** The nearest beach is only 5 minute walk away past the Playa del Sol Hotel. There are a number of Beach Bars where snacks, tea, coffee soft and alcoholic drinks can be purchased. Jet skis and pedalos can also be hired in summer (but check that your holiday insurance covers these risks first). If you are on the beach on a hot day and the locals are not swimming take care, there may be jellyfish around!

**CARE IN THE SUN.** You will quite naturally want to get out in the sun and build up a beautiful tan while you are here, but a few simple precautions will make this an enjoyable experience and avoid any discomfort during your holiday.

- Begin with a higher factor sun tan cream and gradually work down.
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic liquids – alcohol dehydrates the body.
- Take short regular breaks out of the sun, especially in the early afternoon when the sun's rays are strongest.
- Take particular care with children, keep their heads covered and reapply creams if they are in and out of the water.
- Keep your own head covered and seek shade if you feel dizzy.
- Apply plenty of moisturizing cream after sunbathing to avoid dry and peeling skin.

In general, do not risk sunstroke by rushing into the sun early in your holiday; the longer the tan takes to develop, the longer it will last when you return home and you will not suffer *lobster syndrome* during your holiday.

**ROADS AND DRIVING IN SPAIN.** Be aware that many roads are not of the same standard as UK or Eire and may not have footpaths or be poorly lit at night. Spanish drivers rarely use indicators when turning or pulling in to park. Take particular care when walking at night or crossing busy roads. Under no circumstances cross the dual carriageways except by a bridge or underpass. The hiring of mopeds and motor bikes is not recommended unless you are particularly familiar with these modes of transport; safety helmets are required. When driving in Spain you must carry a valid photocard license or a European license, proof of insurance, two reflective warning triangles, a spare wheel and a spare set of lamp bulbs. If you wear spectacles to drive you must carry a spare pair inside the vehicle. The requirement to carry an EU approved 'high visibility jacket' was introduced in the first half of 2004, this must be carried INSIDE the driver's compartment, not in the boot. In Spain and Gibraltar vehicles drive on the RIGHT. Safety belts are compulsory and a child under the age of 12 must have an approved child seat if sitting in the front. Dipped headlights must be used at night on motorways (Autovias) and fast roads and at all times in tunnels. On mountain roads the horn must be sounded on approaching blind corners. Most of the Motorways charge tolls (Peaje). Speed limits are clearly marked and these are strictly enforced using Radar, often fitted in unmarked police patrol cars and helicopters and fines are charged on the spot. Basic speed limits are; Motorways (Autopistas/Autovias) 120 kph, Dual Carriageways 100 kph, Country Roads 90 kph, Urban Roads 50 kph, Residential Areas 20 kph, Albayalde Community 10 kph, but individual stretches may have further restrictions. Excessive speeding and driving while under the influence of drink have recently been re-classified as serious offences in Spain and can result in a jail sentence and a heavy fine. Beware that many on-street parking spaces require a ticket, particularly in busy streets or seafront roads, and offending vehicles may be towed away without warning or result in a fine. No parking areas are marked in yellow, metered and restricted parking zones are marked in blue; there will be a meter somewhere near. Some zones have restricted parking on certain days e.g. 'market day'. Using a mobile phone whilst driving in Spain can result in an on the spot fine of up to 300€

**MEDICAL.** There are many local English speaking Doctors in Spain but Chemists (Farmacia in Spanish - marked by a green cross) cover a much wider range of services than in UK and often sell items over the counter that are only available on prescription in UK or Eire, so it may be worth visiting them first. There is a '*multi lingual*' Health Centre in San Pedro on the beach side opposite the Bus Station, which accepts most Health Insurance agreements. If you are on medication its safer to assume you will not get the identical medicine in Spain although, if you show the packaging to a Chemist, they will often have a similar potion or lotion. There is a chemist in Cancelada and many along both sides of the Carretera A7/N340. There is always a 'Duty Chemist' available; their address will be posted on Pharmacias that are closed.

**BANKS.** Most banks on the Costa have English speaking staff but commission charges are high and there is a minimum charge for every transaction so it may not be economic to change small amounts of cash at a bank. You will need your Passport for banking transactions. Automatic telling machines (holes in the wall!) accept most UK bank cash cards.

**TELEPHONES.** There are public telephone boxes at the beach end of Villacana Car Park and by the garbage bins just past the Reception Office. When using the local telephone system to call UK dial 0044 (00353 for Eire) and omit the leading '0' of the area code. To make a reverse charge call within Europe call 1008, for national information via a local operator dial 1003, for international directories dial 025.

**MAIL BOXES.** There is a big yellow Post Box by the public telephone near the recycle bins just past the Reception Office. Mail is collected at 1 p.m. weekdays, 12 p.m. Saturdays, but be aware that Spanish mail can be very slow even from Estepona Post Office. If you want your post card to arrive home before you do, your best bet is to post it at the Sub Post Office inside Corte Ingles department store. Postage stamps (sellos) are available in Post Offices and tobacconists. A post card, or 'standard' sized letter up to 20 gms, requires a 0.60€ stamp for European addresses (2008 prices - these prices increase regularly!).

If you are living here for some time and expect mail, it arrives in Reception and is delivered to your mailbox or front door daily each working-day evening. Be aware mail can take some time in the Spanish Postal system! You will be notified with a chit when Registered Mail arrives for you in Estepona Post Office, you will need a Passport to collect this mail from the Post Office. Your postal address in Albayalde is:

(your name)  
 Calle (Street name) No.?  
 Urb. Albayalde  
 Ctra. Cadiz-Malaga Km.165  
 29689 Estepona (Malaga), Spain

**MOSQUITOES.** Mosquito repellent machines are readily available in supermarkets. These simply plug into any electrical socket and are highly recommended particularly in bedrooms at night.

**SHOPPING.** Immediate requirements on arrival and fresh baguettes and milk daily can be met at the local mini-market store down the road to the beach. There is a selection of small shops over the carretera footbridge in Cancelada. English and many foreign newspapers are now printed in Spain and widely available. For larger shopping try Carrefour Supermarket on the outskirts to Estepona or Mercadona on the other side of the carretera near the Cancelada turn off. There is a very large department store, with large food store on the ground floor, at Hipercor / Corte Ingles . This is situated on the right hand side of the main road at the entrance to Puerto Banus approximately 10 Km from Albayalde. A large shopping centre, including an enclosed Mall, called La Canada, is located approximately 20 Km from Albayalde towards Malaga. It is on the left hand side of the main road by the Ojen turn off (Km. 182). Shops are generally open 1000-1400 and 1630-1930, although larger stores are open 1000-2200. Shops are not open Sundays except in high season. Shopping trolleys require a 50c or 1€ coin to release them. Note that you will need to show a Passport or photo driving license to use a credit card in most shops and the larger shops will seal any plastic bags prior to entering the food sections.

**UK/EIRE TO CONTINENTAL EUROPE CONVERSION TABLES**

<b>LADIES</b>						<b>GENTS</b>							
<b>UK &amp; EIRE</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>UK &amp; EIRE</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>		
<b>CONTINENTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>CONTINENTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>54</b>		
<b>SHIRTS</b>						<b>SHOES</b>							
<b>UK &amp; EIRE</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>UK &amp; EIRE</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CONTINENTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>		<b>CONTINENTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>CHILDREN</b>													
From 1 month to 24 months, sizes are shown in months													
From 2 years to 15 years, sizes are shown in years													

**EATING AND DRINKING OUT** Many restaurants in Spain open around 9 a.m. for breakfast and 7 p.m. for dinner, however the Spanish mainly take breakfast about 10 a.m., lunch (often the main meal of the day) between 1.30 p.m. and 3.30 p.m. and dinner between 10 p.m. and midnight. Restaurants range from the more expensive in Marbella and Puerto Banus, but still cheaper than UK, to the cheaper Bodegas and Tapas Bars all along the coast. A wide variety of choice is available including Italian, Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Argentinean to name but a few as well as full English roasts and, of course, Spanish; you will be spoilt for choice. Tipping is not obligatory although around 10% is the norm; in Spain, especially in cafes and bars, the loose change is normally left on the saucer. Some of the more up-market establishments will add a fixed percentage to the bill for service. Check whether 7% I.V.A. (VAT equivalent) is included in the menu price or not.

There is a wide variety of bars available throughout the Costa ranging from the renowned Cocktail Bars in Marbella through many styles of local bars, including English and Irish, to the beachside Chiringuitos . Most sell snacks or tapas . Some are closed out of season, particularly in the remoter areas. Alcoholic drinks are cheap, are not measured and are typically 'doubles'. Be very careful if you are driving as the legal limits of blood alcohol while driving in Spain are less than in UK and the traffic police target rental cars in the summer months. Random breath tests are legal in Spain.

**LOCAL STREET MARKETS.** These are popular with both locals and tourists. Keep your cash, handbags and mobile telephones well secured and do not carry excess cash with you. Local Street Market days are:

Monday	-	Marbella
Wednesday	-	Estepona (Town)
Thursday	-	San Pedro
Friday	-	Cancelada (fruit and vegetable)
Saturday	-	Puerto Banus
Sunday	-	Estepona (Port) & Sabinillas

## PUBLIC HOLIDAY

January 1	-	New Year's Day
January 6	-	Epiphany, Three Kings
February 28	-	Andalucia Day
March 19	-	St Joseph's Day, Father's Day
Good Friday	-	
Easter Monday	-	
May 1	-	Labour Day
July 25	-	St. James Day
August 15	-	Assumption Day
October 12	-	National Day (Columbus Day)
November 1	-	All Saint's Day
December 6	-	Constitution Day
December 8	-	Immaculate Conception
December 25	-	Christmas Day

In addition there are a number of local holidays celebrated in individual regions and towns. See local press for details.

### SUGGESTED EXCURSIONS FROM ALBAYALDE.

**RONDA** . By road or by mountain train from Algeciras. A historic city with spectacular views from the City Bridge built in the 18th Century, and the oldest Bull Ring in Spain.

**GRANADA** . Well worth the trip but, if travelling independently, be aware that you may not get into the Alhambra Palace without a prior reservation particularly in high season. See also the Fortress, the magnificent gardens, the Lion's Hall and the King's Room.

**SEVILLA** . Historic city with La Giralda, Cathedral and Bull Ring. Sevilla can be very hot in mid summer.

**CORDOBA** . Historic city with elegant buildings and squares. The Mosque was built by the Moors in 785.

**MIJAS** . Situated behind Fuengirola about 45 minutes drive from Albayalde. The town centre is car free, catch a donkey taxi. See the balcony of the Moorish Kings, Museum of Miniatures and Spain's only square Bull Ring.

**GIBRALTAR** . Beautiful views across the Straits plus duty free goods (allowance per adult: 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 20 cigars plus 1 litre of spirits and 2 litres of still table wine or 2 litres of fortified sparkling wine plus 50 gms perfume or 0.25 litre toilet water plus 175€ in goods - **the rules for cigarettes and spirits are strictly enforced on re-entering Spain.** Long queues form for cars both ways at the border so consider parking in La Linea and walking across the border. A regular bus service runs from the Gibraltar side to the centre of town. Do not forget to take your Passport with you. Gibraltar Bank Holidays in 2008 are: 1st Jan, 29th Jan (new BH for Constitution Day), 13th Mar, Good Friday (21<sup>st</sup> Mar), Easter Monday (24th Mar), 1st May, 7th May, 11th Jun, 27th Aug, 10th Sep, 25th, 26th & 31st Dec.

**TANGIER** . A day trip to North Africa is well worth the effort but go in an organised party and not on your own.

**DEPARTURE** . On your final departure at the end of your holiday please place all perishable food in the outside bins and return your keys as arranged with your Agent. The cost of a Taxi to Malaga Airport is approximately 85 € Some taxis will offer greatly reduced price but these are illegal, cowboy operators who may not carry full insurance and may well be stopped by the Police resulting in you missing your flight home. Flight details should be confirmed with the airline operator the day before departure. The contact number should be on your ticket. Don't forget to pack your passport, flight tickets and home house and car keys in your hand baggage. Remember it may be considerably colder when you arrive home, particularly in the evening or at night, so pack or carry suitable clothes!

**AND FINALLY** - If you have any information you think might be of use to future visitors, or details you would like added to this guide, please send me an e-mail to: [webmaster@albayalde.info](mailto:webmaster@albayalde.info)

*Thank you*

*Finally we hope that you enjoyed your holiday on the Costa del Sol, and to Albayalde in particular, and will return again soon.*