

Cortijo Romero - A Special Place

This is a retreat centre like no other, nestled among spectacular mountains in enclosed gardens. Almost all visitors comment upon its harmony, beauty and ambience.

The original farm house is built around an enclosed courtyard, with the main group room opening off it. It has a large flat roof, used for yoga, tai chi, socialising and star-gazing.

The pool is a curved, natural shape, cocooned in a picturesque, walled enclosure with palm trees, flowers and the scent of jasmine. As the area is completely private, swimming costumes are optional.

There are several splendid garden areas, with abundant sub-tropical flowers, fruit and trees, open and secluded spaces, intriguing scents and colours of every hue. The areas are often used for course sessions, as well as for sunbathing, quiet times, reading, meditation and games. There is also a beautiful meditation room.

Around a delightful dining patio are grouped an indoor dining room, a lounge with a log fire for chillier winter evenings and a second group room which can also be used for reading, music and other activities.

The site is terraced, which adds to the charm but which may not be easy for those with severe physical disabilities, although there are some ramps. We will always help if we possibly can. Please ask if in doubt.

This is not an hotel, but more like a large private home, entirely devoted to personal development holidays. It is truly unique, with a very special beauty.

Accommodation:

The bedrooms are simply but comfortably furnished in local style, all with bath or shower. Most are singles or twins, with a few doubles. It is possible to book a double room as a single, which will incur the single person supplement of £50 for the week.

There is a guest laundry. But there are no television, radio, internet or office facilities.

There are two well-equipped group rooms and there is a beautiful circular meditation room for quieter times. A comfortable lounge has a small library of books and music, a variety of board games, and videos of the local area. The dining room has hot drinks available free at all times, as well as a simple bar for wine and beer.

Inspiring Location

CR's spectacular region is called La Alpujarra, an unspoiled Natural Park in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada in Granada province, deep in the south of Spain. Part of the area has been designated a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO, with many unique or rare species. Its skies are officially rated as the cleanest in Europe.

Here in the real Andalucía, **the "duende" (spirit) of passionate living** is revered. It was once ruled by the Moors, who thought it was the paradise promised to them by Allah. Part of their legacy is the "acequia", an ancient system of irrigation which still brings water from the mountains to CR's gardens and fields.

Cortijo Romero sits at 1300 feet in a fertile valley, within an 800-year old olive grove, surrounded by magnificent mountain views. (And not only in daytime: watching the stars over the mountains at midnight from the roof is a magical experience!)

The local town is Órgiva, the regional administrative centre, a 15-minute walk away. It has a typical weekly market, banks and all basic shopping facilities. Further up in the mountains there is a string of wonderful villages (many protected from development by special status) tucked into sheltered hillsides amidst glorious scenery at heights up to 5700 feet.

Nearby Granada has the finest Moorish palace and gardens in Europe, the breath-taking Alhambra - one of the wonders of the world.

Superb Climate

With 325 days of sun, low humidity and little rain, this is the mildest climate in Europe, where much of life is lived in the open air. All the winter months are warmer than early May in London, and flowers bloom throughout. Lunch al fresco can happen even in January, and some gentle sunbathing is nearly always possible. In the strong and brilliant sunshine, it often feels warmer outdoors than in.

By March, spring is well under way and temperatures are often up to midsummer ones in England. After that, nature simply runs riot, with a huge variety of flora and fauna. The long summers are hot, although tempered by breezes from the sea and the mountains. During this period, Cortijo Romero and its pool form a shady green oasis in the midst of shimmering, dry heat, when sun cream and a long siesta can seem essential!

Swimming is usually from April - October, although the pool is open all year round. Even if you don't go in, it's a wonderful place to sit or sunbathe at any time. By May, many people can't stay out of the pool and midnight bathing is a regular feature in the hottest months.