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VENTA Del COMPADRE / Velefique / OLUDA Del RIO

22nd February 2018

We were very fortunate with the weather this time, for on the day it was sunny with clear blue skies, albeit rather cold.

Everyone met for coffee and 'whatever' at the lovely old café/restaurant Venta del Compadre, on the N340 road between Sorbas and Tabernas. This is a traditional stop for traveller and certainly worth another visit, especially if you would like to visit the nearby 'Oliverias' for tasting and buying olive oil. It was a little disappointing that although there was a good attendance there were fewer classic cars joining the trip, but nevertheless at least fourteen cars attended.

From here, our organizer for this trip, our friend Alan Sykes, marshalled the troops and we set off along the N340 in the direction of Velefique/ Alan and his friend Mo kindly accompanied us on their motorbikes, making sure no one made any wrong turning. We then started to climb the mountain pass, up countless hairpin bends at the same time enjoying spectacular views as we ascended up to 1,820 metres.

At the top of the pass there is a mirador, but Alan had advised us to stop before then, at an area sufficient for everyone to be able to park and get out to enjoy the magnificent panoramic views. There was even some snow still around left at the side of the road indicating just how inclement the weather had been the week before, proving how fortunate we were on the day?!

The descent was still very serpentine but since we were all by this time, looking forward to our lunch, it appeared to be easier? We arrived at the little town of Bacares, surprising the locals with this sudden arrival of so many unknown cars. This is a pretty rustic village, nestled on the hillside. It is traditionally linked with mining.

The Hotel Las Fuentes is almost alpine in design, in that it has a wealth of beams and lots of evidence that it is frequented by huntsmen since there were heads of indigenous wild animals displayed on the wood panelled walls. The staff had prepared large round tables for us and provided a hearty traditional Spanish meal of salad, cocido, grilled pork and lamb cutlets etc. at a very reasonable 15 euros per head, including copious amounts of wine, some obviously local since it was served in 'jarras'.

After lunch we continued our descent and made our way to Olula del Rio where we enjoyed a post lunch coffee at the spacious and modern La Tejera Hotel.

We would like to thank Alan Sykes for all the effort he put in arranging this trip, especially since it was at the last minute so to speak, hence in a very short space of time.

Maria