

ANDALUCÍA'S TOP-5 ECO LUXURY RETREATS

25th January 2022
in **BRIGHT** life

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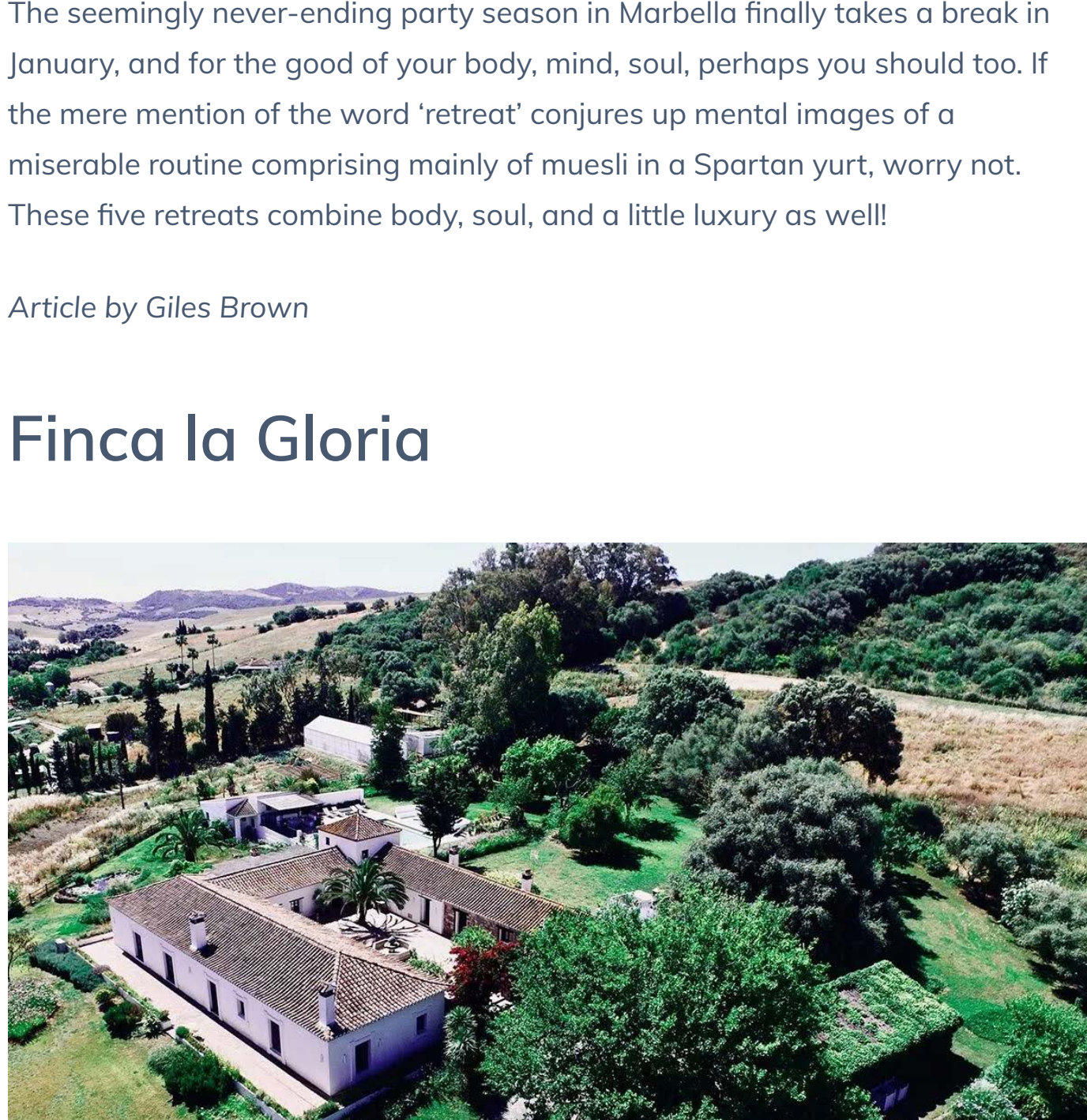
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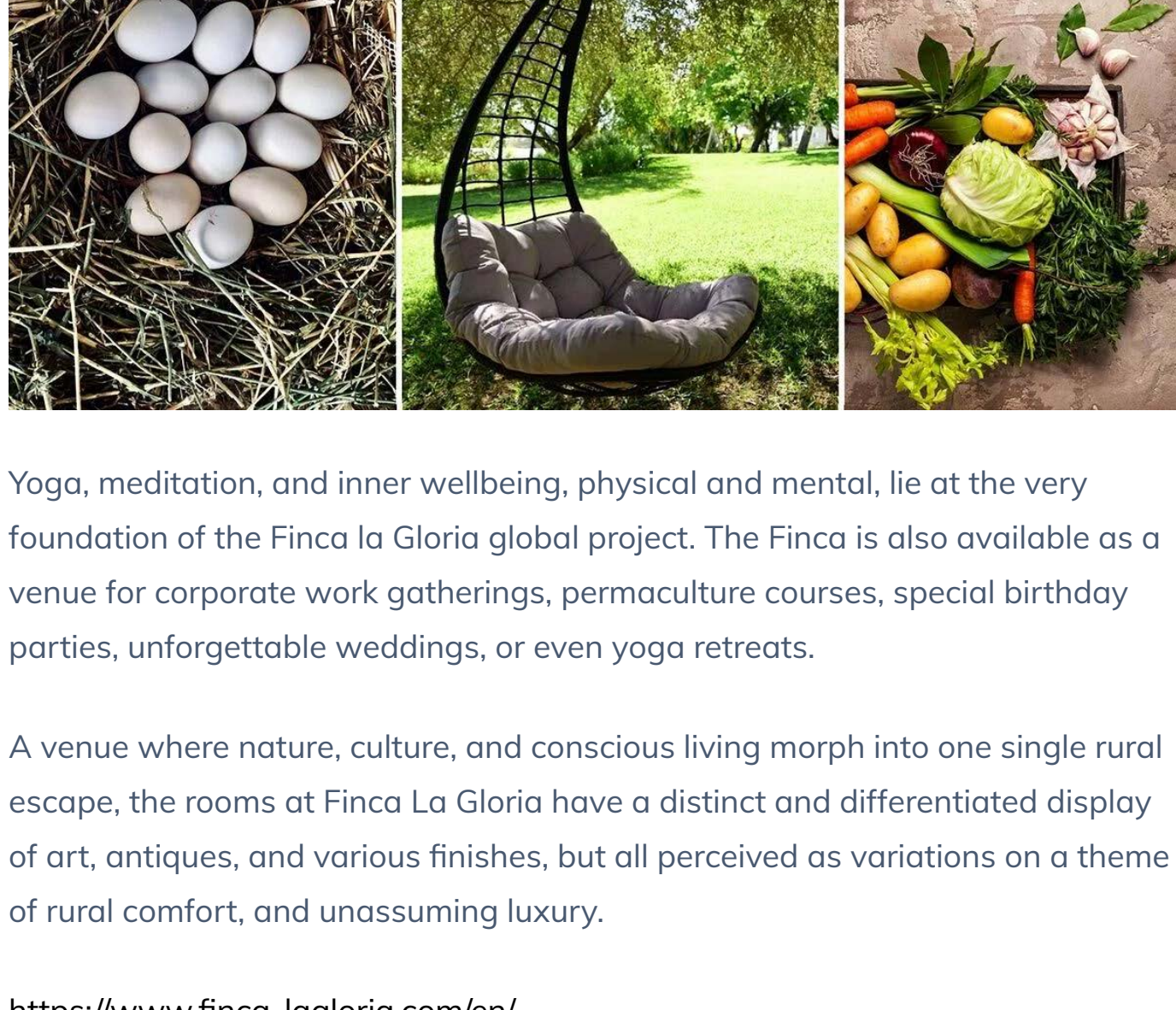
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The seemingly never-ending party season in Marbella finally takes a break in January, and for the good of your body, mind, soul, perhaps you should too. If the mere mention of the word 'retreat' conjures up mental images of a miserable routine comprising mainly of muesli in a Spartan yurt, worry not. These five retreats combine body, soul, and a little luxury as well!

Article by Giles Brown

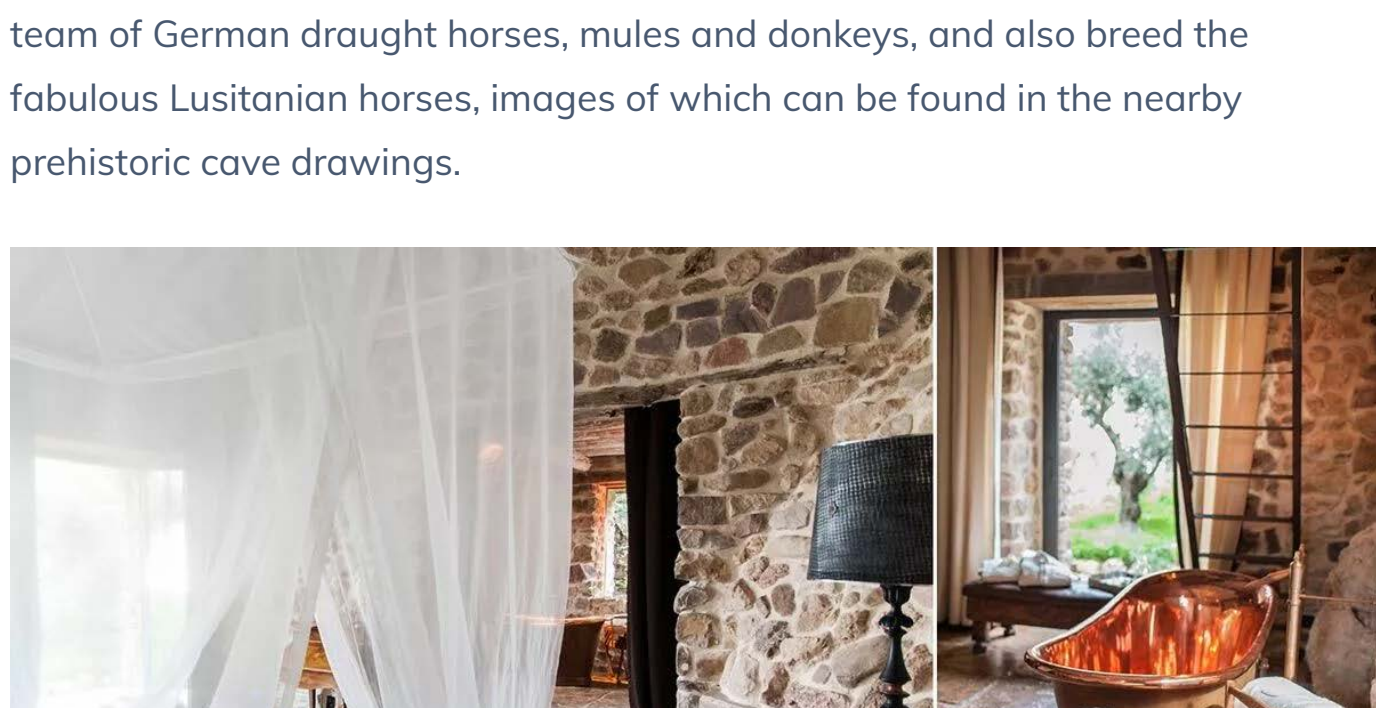
Finca la Gloria



La Gloria - a venue where nature, culture, and conscious living morph into one rural escape

Finca La Gloria combines a traditional Andalusian farm with the concept of permaculture, where learning about methods of restoring the soil and the cultivation of sustainable crops cohabit in harmony with the personal contemplation of art and inner growth.

First coined in the 1970's by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, permaculture is a set of design principles simulating the patterns and resilient features observed in nature and centred around three main objectives: earth care, people care and fair share, returning surplus to both earth and people. Although the original focus of permaculture was sustainable food production, its philosophy has expanded over time to encompass economic, social, and political systems.



Yoga, meditation, and inner wellbeing, physical and mental, lie at the very foundation of the Finca la Gloria global project. The Finca is also available as a venue for corporate work gatherings, permaculture courses, special birthday parties, unforgettable weddings, or even yoga retreats.

A venue where nature, culture, and conscious living morph into one single rural escape, the rooms at Finca La Gloria have a distinct and differentiated display of art, antiques, and various finishes, but all perceived as variations on a theme of rural comfort, and unassuming luxury.

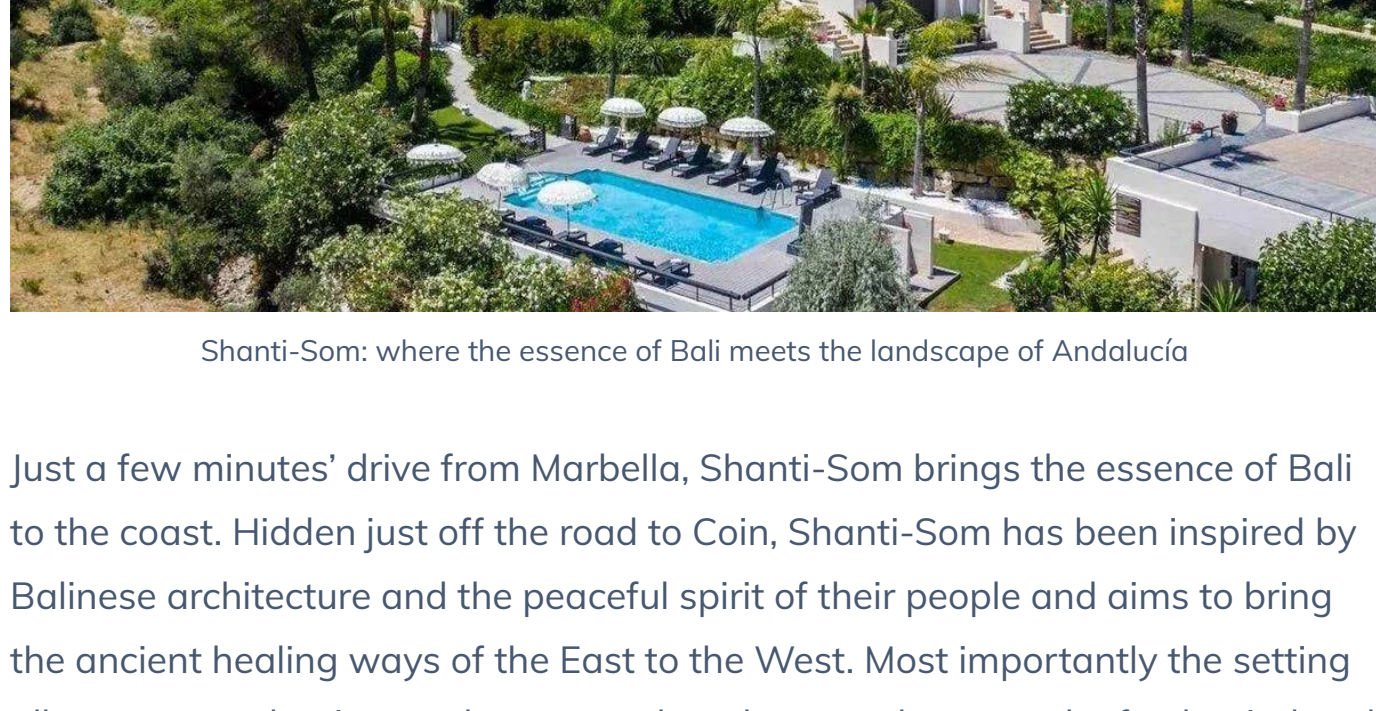
<https://www.finca-lagloria.com/en/>

Finca La Donaira



La Donaira, a perfect setting to refresh and reboot

An organic working farm occupying 1.500 acres in the beautiful Serranía de Ronda, Finca La Donaira is the perfect setting for you to refresh and reboot. A day's walk around the estate, with its green valleys dotted with plantations, organic orchards and a vineyard, to the rocky crags and old oaks and through olive and almond groves is enough to bring a sprinkling of serenity. There is also the opportunity to see a permaculture inspired farm, blending tradition and innovation, in perfect harmony with its surroundings, complete with sheep and goats, rare and endangered breeds of cattle such as the pajuna cow, chickens and bees. As well as this, the team at Finca La Donaira work the land with a team of German draught horses, mules and donkeys, and also breed the fabulous Lusitanian horses, images of which can be found in the nearby prehistoric cave drawings.



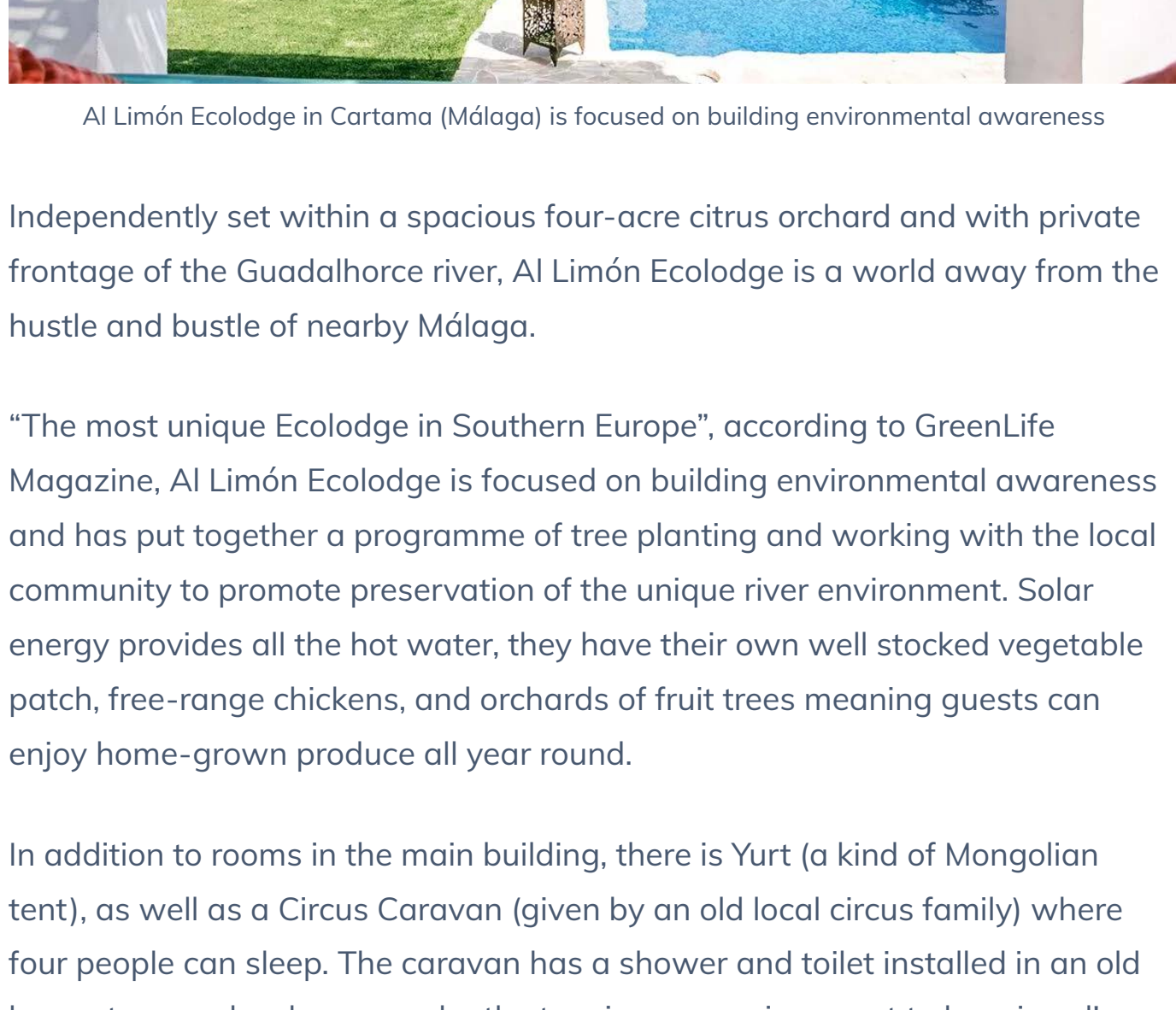
Award-winning luxurious rooms at La Donaira

Away from the strenuous activity of the farm are the nine luxurious rooms – La Donaira has scooped several international awards – and a stunning spa that features a 21-metre indoor pool with underwater lighting and mountain peak views, as well as a hammam, and Russian wood sauna.

If you want to chill out in nature, there is an 'invigorating' plunge pool, spring-fed outdoor pool, meditation points and a yoga platform.

<https://ladonaira.com/>

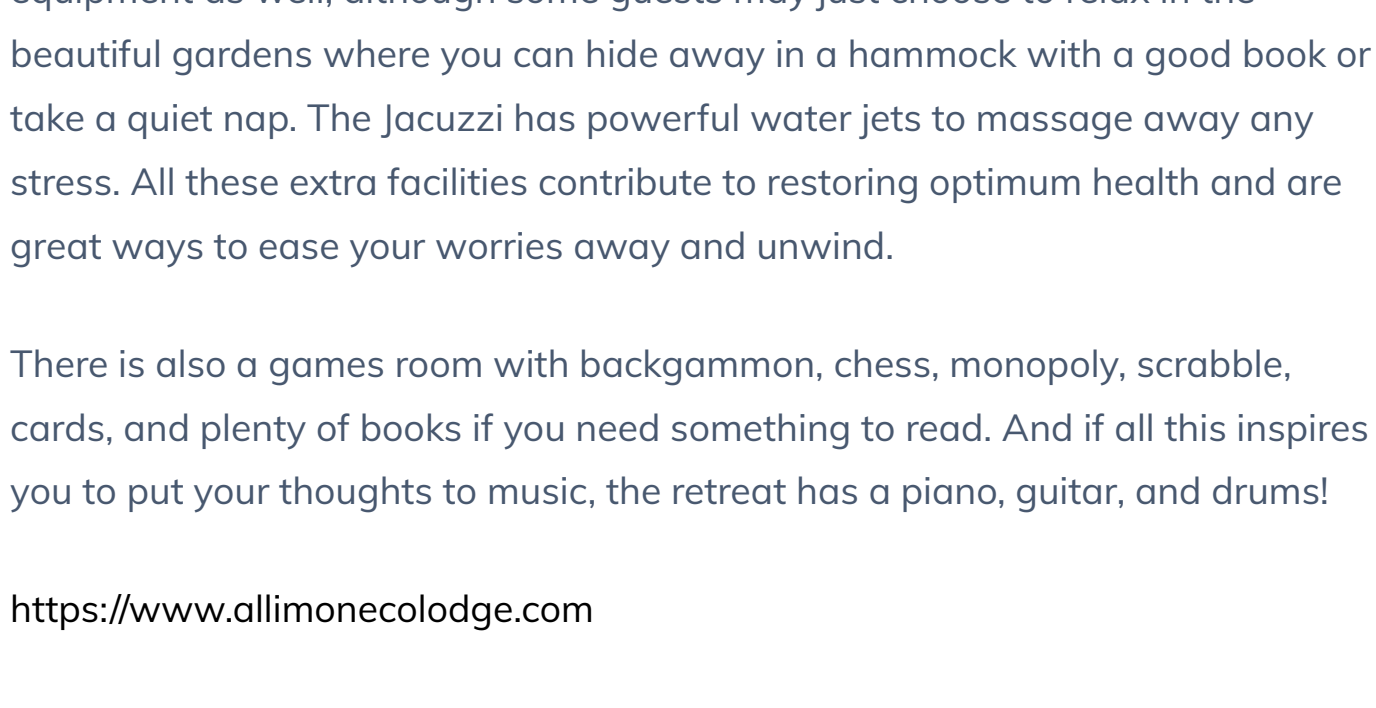
Hotel Cortijo del Marqués



If you want your retreat to have a little (over 500 years!) of history, head up to Hotel Cortijo del Marqués

If you want your retreat to have a little history, buckle your swash and head up to Hotel Cortijo del Marqués. Located in the countryside just outside Granada, the main building is at least 500 years old, though the Roman columns in one of the hotel rooms suggest an even older history. After the conquest of Granada in 1492, the remaining Moors were forced to hand over two thirds of their property. A large estate measuring several thousand hectares at the base of the Pozuela mountains was handed over to the Marquis (Marqués in Spanish) of Mondéjar and became known as the Cortijo del Marqués.

The full name of Marqués of Mondéjar is Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, he was the captain general of the kingdom of Granada and Altaide of the Alhambra. Having become a close friend of the king, he was assigned several high profile jobs such as overseeing the construction of the renaissance Cathedral of Granada and the Palace of Charles V in the Alhambra.



All the suites are designed differently in Hotel Cortijo de Marqués

Towards the end of the 20th century the Cortijo but was abandoned and quickly deteriorated. Despite its glorious past nobody but the locals were aware of its existence, but it was carefully restored as a small country house hotel at the turn of the century. Many original features were maintained, and the property still has the air of a historical Andalusian manor house. The beautifully restored chapel has become a popular venue for weddings and celebrations, as well as music and dance performances, and there are acres of beautiful countryside to explore and unwind in, be it on foot, by mountain bike or even on horseback.

<https://www.cortijodelmarques.com/en/>

Shanti-Som



Shanti-Som: where the essence of Bali meets the landscape of Andalucía

Just a few minutes' drive from Marbella, Shanti-Som brings the essence of Bali to the coast. Hidden just off the road to Coin, Shanti-Som has been inspired by Balinese architecture and the peaceful spirit of their people and aims to bring the ancient healing ways of the East to the West. Most importantly the setting allows guests the time and space to slow down, recharge and refresh mind and body.

The intimate 15-room retreat is based on wellness programs that focus on a guest's personal goals from general health, fitness, weight loss, mental wellbeing, and relaxation. It offers the opportunity to explore health through the combination of balanced wholesome cuisine, rejuvenating spa treatments, yoga, pilates, meditation and personalised coaching.

Rather than building a large flashy complex, the owner wanted to create an intimate setting, to ensure that guests do not feel self-conscious or intimidated in any way during their stay. There is an expansive oriental garden with Buddha statues, as well as waterfall features and a Balinese Yoga pavilion in the place. This pavilion uses the same principles of Balinese spiritual architecture, which is to create a sacred place that is in line with harmonious and balanced energy. This is of importance in the philosophy 'Tri Hats Karana'- creating harmony and balance between Man, nature, and the gods.

<https://www.shantisom.com/en/>

Al Limón Ecolodge

Al Limón Ecolodge in Cartama (Málaga) is focused on building environmental awareness

Independently set within a spacious four-acre citrus orchard and with private frontage of the Guadalhorce river, Al Limón Ecolodge is a world away from the hustle and bustle of nearby Málaga.

"The most unique Ecolodge in Southern Europe", according to GreenLife Magazine, Al Limón Ecolodge is focused on building environmental awareness and has put together a programme of tree planting and working with the local community to promote preservation of the unique river environment. Solar energy provides all the hot water, they have their own well stocked vegetable patch, free-range chickens, and orchards of fruit trees meaning guests can enjoy home-grown produce all year round.

In addition to rooms in the main building, there is Yurt (a kind of Mongolian tent), as well as a Circus Caravan (given by an old local circus family) where four people can sleep. The caravan has a shower and toilet installed in an old lemon tree, and a shower under the tree is an experience not to be missed!

Yoga is a central part of the activities at Al Limón

Yoga forms an important part of Al Limón Ecolodge, and the facilities are designed to cater for international teachers hosting group yoga retreats. The Yoga Cane Platform, an open-air, natural cane-structure space is perfect for yoga practice and to foster a connection with nature. The Yoga Sala, inside the House, is a natural wood floored Yoga Sala and has aerial yoga facilities, plus all the equipment necessary to practice yoga on the floor.

The gardens have a ping pong table, football, and volleyball pitch as well as a petanque court. There are four mountain bikes and free use of fishing equipment as well, although some guests may just choose to relax in the beautiful gardens where you can hide away in a hammock with a good book or take a quiet nap. The Jacuzzi has powerful water jets to massage away any stress. All these extra facilities contribute to restoring optimum health and are great ways to ease your worries away and unwind.

There is also a games room with backgammon, chess, monopoly, scrabble, cards, and plenty of books if you need something to read. And if all this inspires you to put your thoughts to music, the retreat has a piano, guitar, and drums!

<https://www.allimonecolodge.com>