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THE QUARANTINE ISSUE

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## TAKING OFF

by travel-expert José Berrocoso

*Cortijo del Marques, a historic 16th century country estate, is an idyllic rural boutique hotel surrounded by thousand of olive trees and wheat fields as well as stunning views of the Sierra Arana in Granada, and not far from the Arabian marvels of the Alhambra, gems of both the rich Islamic and Christian heritage hidden in old Andalusia.*

# THE BEAUTY OF ANDALUSIAN COUNTRYSIDE

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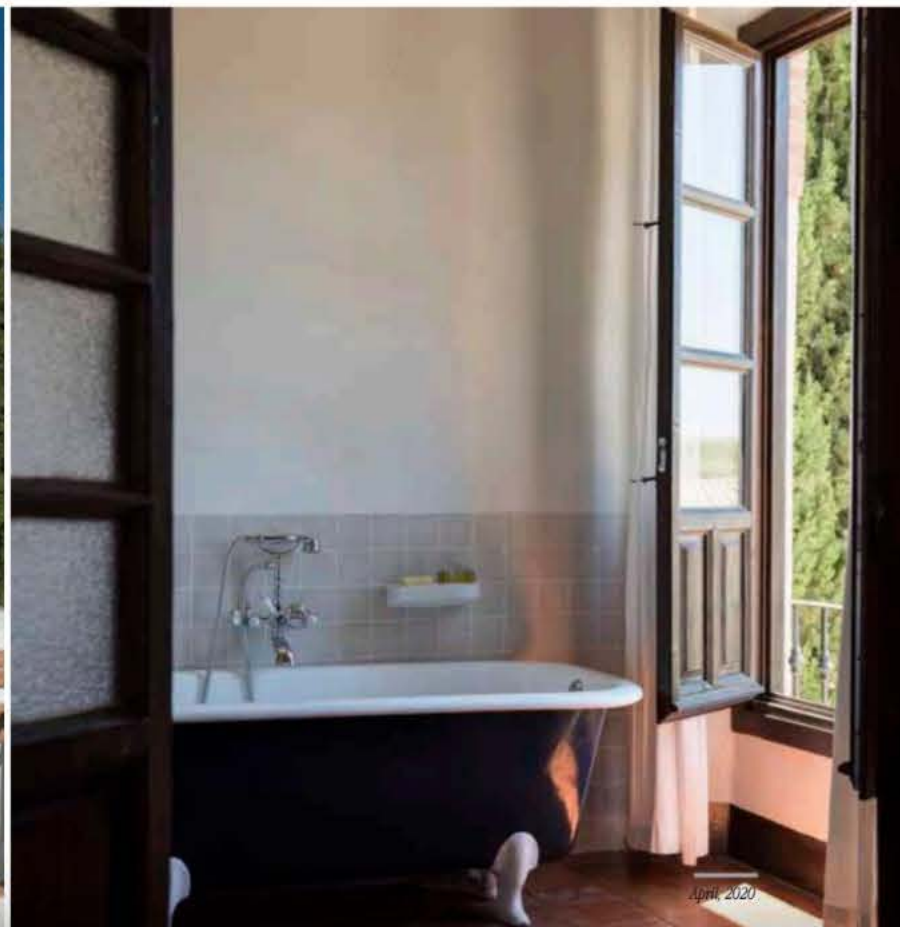
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The Cortijo del Marques is owned by Austrian-Dutch couple Ilko and Silvia Bruggers, two professionals of the finance and marketing world that after living in Hong Kong, London and Amsterdam, decided to set up in the capital of Spain. In 2010, they were looking for a weekend house not far from Madrid when they fell in love with this hideaway in Albolote, Granada. Today, their rural boutique hotel prides in service and excellence. Resurfaced records traced the building back 500 years, to a time when it was home to the Marquis of Mondejar, a close friend of Charles V, and Roman columns were uncovered in what is now the Aljibes suite.

The stone-built property does have wonderfully authentic carisma, stepped in history and is the perfect place for guests to relax, unwind and enjoy their stay. The historic 16th century country estate has been restored to perfection by mixing old world charm with modern comforts, and the guest rooms have pleasing rustic decor, with wooden or tiled floors and wooden beams.

There are 15 bedrooms and guests harbouring fantasies of being an aristocratic Spanish landowner will love La Terraza, with its four-poster bed and vast balcony from which to survey their kingdom. For those with less refined inclinations, there is La Cuadra – an inspired reimagining of the original ground-floor stables, with wooden feeding troughs worn shiny and smooth with age. The adjacent chapel was built in 1878 and blessed by Pope Leon XIII (it still has the original wax-sealed documents to prove it).

Friendly and efficient staff will make this one of the best hotel experiences guests have ever had. Feel the pure beauty and stillness of the Andalusian country-side, a perfect place for relaxation and reflection.





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Outside, the set-up is excellent especially for families with kids. There's an outdoors swimming pool and comfortable sun loungers where you can take in the rays of the sun and enjoy the views of the surrounding countryside that is void of building or human activity in general. Apart from being a place to relax, the Cortijo del Marques is also an ideal base for excursions in the area. A visit to the world-famous Alhambra palaces in Granada to see the magnificent Moorish architecture and wonderful gardens or perhaps a day out to Granada to see the Cathedral and the Albayzin Quarter where you can stroll through the medieval streets and soak up the atmosphere. The city of Granada is just 25 minutes from the hotel.