

# Discover the **Costa Blanca**

Derek Workman continues his series of excursions from his book 'Inland Trips From the Costa Blanca' which features 22 detailed trips that lead you to spots you'd never find by yourself.

## Utiel – Not exactly beautiful but with plenty of bull

IT MUST be admitted that Utiel lacks the charm of nearby Requena, but it does have its moments, particularly in the warren of narrow streets around the church. The church itself is magnificent in its simplicity. Barely decorated, in complete contrast to most of the churches in the Valencian Community, the simple stone walls and barley-sugar twist pilasters with their gilded capitals has a majesty that outweighs much of the extravagant ornamentation seen elsewhere.



Utiel arch

With recordings of Gregorian chant enhancing more than destroying the peacefulness, it is the sort of place where, even if you aren't of a religious mind, you can't help but want to sit awhile and absorb the tranquillity.

Utiel is one of the main wine production towns in the Valencian Community, and gives its name to the Denominación de Origen Utiel-Requena (where its name goes first, much to the chagrin of the Requenesses). Once mainly exported or used for blending, the region is now producing some excellent wines, hence the D.O., and is Valencia's main producer of cava.

The Cooperativa Agrícola Utiel is the main bodega to visit in Utiel for well-priced wines. Great tiled swatches of grapevines decorate either side of the arched doorway with a tiled panel above depicting a poetic rural landscape of lowing oxen pulling a plough through deeply tilled earth.

The huge metal door itself would look more in keeping as the entrance to a prison, but during working hours it opens to reveal the work going on around the huge shining vats in which the wine is produced. Two large tiled plaques inform you that it was built between 1949 and 1960 and has a capacity of 30 million litres: some resaca (hangover!) Step inside and the bouquet certainly doesn't have the hint of chocolate and raspberries that wine aficionados eulogise about. If you want to sample the product you can do so at the Despach de Vinos next door.

To see how it's all done, visit the Museo del Vino housed in the Bodega Redondo (Round Bodega – which is exactly what it was) where tools and equipment used in wine making for centuries past are on display. As you walk around the lower section, where the wine would once have been stored, look up at the ceiling and you will see it is made up of broken bits of tiles (to help with insulation), some of which are so gorgeous that any collector would give his eye teeth even for the damaged piece.

Unlike the façade of the Cooperativa, the bullring almost opposite is more a thing of ugly than a thing of beauty. Even so, the locals are inordinately proud of their plaza de toros, which was built in 1858 and rivals that of Bocairant as the oldest in the



Utiel church

Comunidad and is the second largest in the region, second only to the bullring in the capital.

The Guardia Civil barracks on Calle Heroes de Tollo (which presumably celebrates a battle, although I could find nothing relating to the name other than an hotel, restaurant and industrial estate) is like a big iced birthday cake in the shape of a castle, with turrets and all. Don't be tempted to take a photo though, because they are considered military establishments and therefore secret – although how secret can they be, stuck on the main road into town! I was pulled inside one a couple of years ago when I was spotted photographing the barracks in Torreveja and was only allowed out after a sergeant had a long conversation with the editor of the newspaper I was working for and I deleted the image.

To discover more about Spain, visit [www.derekworkman-journalist.com](http://www.derekworkman-journalist.com) and <http://derekworkman.wordpress.com>. <http://valpapparazzi.wordpress.com> are random notes about life in Spain. Derek Workman's books, Inland Trips from the Costa Blanca and Small Hotels and Inns of Eastern Spain are available from most good books shops or direct from the publisher, Santana Books, [www.santanabooks.com](http://www.santanabooks.com) or Tel. 952 485 838.

## Pink Fizz

- 3 Apples
- Handful of raspberries (fresh or frozen)
- Lemon
- Ice

This even tastes fizzy - the lemon gives it a zing and the raspberries turn it into a lovely drink for enjoying by the pool. Juice the apples and the lemon and then put into a blender with the raspberries and ice and serve immediately.

**APPLES** contain Vitamins A, B and C, potassium, pectin, boron, ellagic acid, and carotenes. They are great system cleansers full of dietary fibre, a laxative and lowers cholesterol

**RASPBERRIES** contain vitamin C, potassium, niacin, iron and fibre. They are great for boosting immunity levels

**LEMONS** contain vitamin C, beta-carotene, calcium, magnesium, bioflavonoid and potassium. They are antioxidant and cleansing for the liver and kidneys.

These recipes are supplied by The Kamala Centre. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us at The Kamala Centre on [office@thekamalacentre.com](mailto:office@thekamalacentre.com) or call us on 965 985 869. If you would like a copy of any of these recipes you can download them at our website [www.thekamalacentre.com](http://www.thekamalacentre.com)

Andy and Carol, The Kamala Centre

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## Charity Autumn Fayre

THERE WILL be a Charity Autumn Fayre on Saturday, 13th November 2010, at La Siesta Church, Avenida Granados La Siesta.

The Fayre will be open between 11.00 and 13.00.

## U3A Moraira - Teulada: General Meeting Monday, 6th December 2010

THE VENUE for this meeting is Salon de Banquettes, Avenida Mediterraneo, Teulada. The doors will open to Members at 09.45 and the meeting will start at 10.30.

At the meeting the entertainment will be festive and provided by the U3A Members who will also be able to join Groups and find out about both Travel and Cultural events.

For further information please contact the U3A President, Ann Colclough on 965 747 343.

[www.u3amoraira-teulada.org](http://www.u3amoraira-teulada.org)

**New Attraction in Guadalest!**

# MUSEUM of Salt and Pepper Shakers

The new attraction in Guadalest is the fascinating Museum of Salt and Pepper Shakers. The collection consists of more than 20,000 Salt and Pepper Shakers from all over the world.

Come and see the amazing variety of colors, shapes, and sizes. From dogs, cats, pigs, and chickens; to cars, TVs and lawn mowers, you will surely find a shaker that will take your fancy.

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