

The Kate Silver's Very Important Blog

Mar Menor, La Manga and a Gated Community in Spain

Posted on November 15, 2014November 16, 2014 by Kate Silver

From Lorca, we traveled to San Pedro del Pinatar, Spain, a coastal city on the Mediterranean. Here, visitors can soak in the Mar Menor, a lagoon-like portion of the Mediterranean, separated from the sea by a 13-mile sleeve, called "La Manga." We'll get to the sleeve in a second. Within the town of San Pedro del Pinatar, many Spaniards own vacation homes and flock here to enjoy the beautiful, calm waters, known for their healing qualities, thanks to mineral-rich mud and salt.



(<https://thekatesilver.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/mar-at-mar-menor.jpg>)

One of our guides was, appropriately, named Mar.

We soaked in the water, slathering ourselves with mud and letting it dry. Then, knowing we had to hop on the bus to hop on a ferry to hop on the bus again, our guide was kind enough to arrange for a spa at Apartamentos Aguas Salinas (Aguas Salinas Apartments) to let us shower. We expected to walk in, and, you know, shower. But ... not quite.

A woman in scrubs and a bathing cap took us, one at a time, into the next room. She explained that her English was limited, so few words were exchanged. It seemed to take a very, very long time, as I waited for my turn. When she was ready for me, I walked in, still wearing my

bathing suit, and looked at the ceiling, hoping to see some kind of water delivery system. Like a shower.

But no.

The very, very sweet woman told me to walk about six feet from her. She suggested that I put on a shower cap and remove my hair clip. I politely declined, thinking I didn't want to get my hair wet, anyway, I just planned on removing the mud.

Then she proceeded to hose me down. She had me face the wall. Then face her. Turn to my side. Lift an arm. A leg. Turn to my other side. Arm. Leg. Then we were done.

It was undoubtedly one of the most unusual and memorable moments of the trip. I'm not sure I'll ever be able to say, again, in my life, that I was professionally hosed.

From there, we headed to lunch at Mar de Sal, a restaurant that looks out on the salt mounds that they extract from the sea.



<https://thekatesilver.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/blog-mar-menor-salt.jpg>

View from the restaurants: Salt!



The pate was more popular with the Spaniards than the Americans. Beautiful though.



<https://thekatesilver.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/blog-pate1.jpg>

Where better to have potato chips than by a salt mine?



Delicious—and abundant—calamari.

Then we hopped on a boat and zipped across the Mediterranean.



<https://thekatesilver.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/blog-la-manga-sand-castles.jpg>

Sand-castle-style condos abound.



<https://thekatesilver.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/blog-house-on-rock.jpg>

Rather than a sand castle, I'd like to live in this house.



<https://thekatesilver.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/blog-plane-mar-menor.jpg>

Ryan Air flies here!



<https://thekatesilver.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/blog-swimming-mar-menor.jpg>

The lone swimmer.

We pulled up in La Manga (The Sleeve), a long, thin stretch of resorts and condos, filled with bars, restaurants and a bubbly, beach-town vibe. We didn't stay here, but instead, headed about a half hour outside of the city to the InterContinental Mar Menor Golf Resort & Spa, a lovely resort with a tempting sparkling pool, surrounded by golf greens, locked away in a gated community.

I admit, I was skeptical at first, since it was so far from the ocean, but the tide changed when I went for a run, checking out the Spanish version of a gated community (not much different than every single neighborhood in Las Vegas), and then savored one of the top meals—quite possibly the top meal—of the trip at Nomad, one of the restaurants at the hotel, where we savored the degustation menu.



El pulpo.

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