

LIFESTYLES



Universitat d'Alacant
Universidad de Alicante

Vicerektorat d'Estudis, Formació i Qualitat
Vicerrectorado de Estudios, Formación y Calidad



Living Places

Charming Spots



CHARMING SPOTS



CHARMING SPOTS

SAN LORENZO BEACH GIJON (SPAIN)



View of San Lorenzo Beach (GIJON), the city where I was born and where I spend the best holidays every year enjoying life near nature and the numerous pilgrimages which are celebrated during the summer, some of them very famous.

Asturias is a natural paradise which always surprises you and makes you return to continue enjoying it.



CHARMING SPOTS

CAMPELLO ALICANTE (SPAIN)



Dawn is breaking and the sunshine is falling on my face. I open my eyes and this is the spot I have seen for many years after waking up. How do I have to feel throughout the day? I feel good, perhaps because I know that I am not entitled to say anything which is not positive and also that I must give back some of the, let's call it energy, that I have received from my bed. It is pure nature, sea, trees; you can make out mountains and that rocky landscape which is so typical of this land.



CHARMING SPOTS

SAN JUAN BEACH ALICANTE (SPAIN)



The charming spot I have chosen is undoubtedly the Mediterranean Sea. The photograph shows an October evening with my children on San Juan beach. I have always lived in Alicante and the sea has always been present in my life, since I was a little girl with my parents; but it's much more present now that I have my own children. Going to the beach for an enjoyable swim and, especially, seeing them play with the sand, walk or look for winkles, limpets and crabs in *Cabo de las*

Huertas [Orchards Cape] are activities not only limited to the summer months; in fact, we do all that as often as the weather permits it, that is, at any time of year. I live so close to the sea now that, during nights with a heavy swell, I can hear the murmur of the waves while I'm lying in my bed. I would love to get up every morning and have breakfast in a terrace gazing at the Mediterranean.



CHARMING SPOTS

SAN JUAN TOWN
ALICANTE (SPAIN)



I have a corner in my little garden where I like to go and sit down to read a book by an orange tree. It is only two years old, but it already bears its fruit, you breathe peace when you are close to it and its sweet perfume envelops you; if you close your eyes, you can have the impression that you are in the anteroom of glory or at least it must be something similar. Sometimes a robin comes to visit me with his peculiar cloak, he asks me for food and I give him some small bread crumbs. When I look at him, I think about the great beauty of nature reflected on such small things and that gives me food for thought...



CHARMING SPOTS

URBANOVA BEACH ALICANTE (SPAIN)



Urbanova beach is my favourite spot. Since my childhood I have enjoyed its beautiful views over the coast of Alicante and its castle.

It has always been a shelter where peace and quiet can be found at dusk. The relaxing movement of the water, its marvellous sound in the middle of silence and its sunsets have turned it into a comforting place for me at moments of reflection.



CHARMING SPOTS

ASPE
ALICANTE (SPAIN)

My favourite spot is my family's country house.



We spend summers (from July and September) year after year at this country house and, besides, we have also used it to hold family events such as birthday parties, family meals, first communion celebrations and so on.

Personally, I have spent very good moments here with other people of my age who also spend the summer in their respective nearby country houses and with whom we have formed a group of friends that still exists today.

My birthday happens to be in August and, therefore, I also have very good memories related to this celebration in my country house; we also organised my first communion celebration here and it was a great party full of friends and relatives of which I still keep wonderful memories.



CHARMING SPOTS

SAN JUAN BEACH ALICANTE (SPAIN)



My favourite place is the terrace of my house in Alicante.

It is the main reason why we bought our current dwelling because what we were looking for was basically good views.

My previous dwelling lacked a proper terrace and the only view that I had was that of the building across the street, which was very near.

One of the best moments in the week is when I sit down at my terrace with a good book and I have the chance to relax listening to the birds. My whole family and I also enjoy it during summer evenings and nights.



CHARMING SPOTS

When I was told that I had to write something about a special spot or place which was relevant in our life, I didn't think twice: THE MOUNTAINS, and more precisely, the Pyrenees in Huesca.

HUESCA PYRENEES
(SPAIN)



I first visited them in October 1989 and ever since then, except for cases of force majeure, I have never failed to visit this region regularly; to live the spring in May and the autumn in October. Both seasons are so different and beautiful! The former, full of colours by the flora and of life by the fauna; the animals walk with their babies and young ones, or fly, the rivers are large streams because of the thaw. The 'silence' of the mountain is full of a beautiful sound. As for the autumn, the ochre and red colours of trees due to the fall of leaves stand out from the green colour of evergreen tree leaves. Both seasons are a real wonder. (I attach pictures of both). I can't fail to highlight the inhabitants of this area; the honourability of Aragonese people is not a myth, I have experienced it and I can assure you it is authentic.

When I am in the mountains, I feel that it is in my own habitat. For me it's obvious that if reincarnation exists, I was a mountain goat or a shephdog in my previous life because, when I am in the mountain, I simply feel FREE AND HAPPY.



CHARMING SPOTS



SAN JUAN BEACH ALICANTE (SPAIN)

Stepping on its sand and being able to walk all over it is one of my favourite hobbies since I started spending the summer here back in 1953. I still remember the first time I stepped on its golden fine sand and the impression that its sea caused on me; I remember what its waves were like on a windy day, which is usual on this beach, a wind that lifted the water and filled it with foam.

I remember that morning and its ambience because, luckily for me, I have been able to enjoy this beach throughout my life and live many more mornings like that one. Those summer mornings enjoying its sun, its luminosity, its transparent waters which for me are unique and which, besides, are within my reach every morning. Not everybody is so lucky; I am aware of that and enjoy that luck. San Juan beach is a constant element in my life and I have never stopped being keen on it throughout these years; there have been many transformations in its environment and surroundings, but for me, the essential things are its sand, its sun and its waters.



CHARMING SPOTS

CUESTA DE LOS CHINOS GRANADA (SPAIN)



La Cuesta de los Chinos [Pebble Slope] is an access to the Alhambra grounds in Granada, very pleasant for me. I knew it quite late, when I had left my teen-age behind and it fascinated me since the first time I saw it. It is a hidden entrance to the Alhambra palaces; it's not very well-known, which is why not many people walk around that area. It is easy to imagine the coming and going of sentries and guards who walked through it when the palaces were inhabited. Now, however, it is a path of great beauty and serenity.

Whenever I climb this slope, it brings me tranquillity and peace. There is a combination of forest and water flowing, far away from the city, which makes it very special.

After going up or down the slope, it is advisable to have something to eat at the *Paseo de los Tristes* [Promenade of the Sad Ones] so that you can enjoy the gastronomy from Granada and, of course, the most beautiful sunset in the world, as Bill Clinton said.



CHARMING SPOTS

**SAN VICENTE DEL RASPEIG
ALICANTE (SPAIN)**



This is the porch at the entrance to my house. It is there that the whole family meets, usually on Sundays; and we end up having our mid-evening gathering there to talk about the latest news. Because it is the first place in the house that receives the shade and, therefore, it is the coolest area. Between 6 and 14 of us get together there, both young and old. Some play, some talk,.... And we spend the evening there until the time comes to leave.



CHARMING SPOTS

GREDOS MOUNTAIN RANGE
AVILA (SPAIN)



For years, I spent the summer months at my uncle's estate, situated in the Avila province, right in the middle of Sierra de Gredos [Gredos Mountain Range], surrounded by practically unspoilt nature, where the study room and the playground were the range itself. Since then, I try to visit it every now and then whenever I have some time available to do so.

I go back there precisely because the mountain marks its own time, which is that of hundred-year-old pine trees, ferns, moss on the rocks, wild blackberries, treacherous stinging nettles and winding brooks. And if you are patient and respect its rhythm, the range will show you blue dragonflies, golden eagles gliding in circles, imposing Spanish ibexes, nervous squirrels, distrustful foxes and thieving wild boars that come closer at night.



CHARMING SPOTS

MORAIRA ALICANTE (SPAIN)



This image evokes various things. The place where I was born and where I spent most of my childhood and youth, where I discovered the first upsetting experiences in my life (like losing my parents when I was still a child and a young girl) and where I made my first friends and started to discover love too.

But, above all, it means the magnetism that nature has on me (blue sea, smell of salt and algae, green pine trees, olive trees, carob trees, aromatic plants, and it all flooded with sunshine and light), and the great value of simplicity and accesibility reflected on the white houses of a small village where you know nearly everyone and you live nearly all the time in the street and within a community..

Now I enjoy this place and this way of life during my holidays (especially in the summertime) and whenever I can get away from work. It still is the meeting place for my whole family, but additionally, it is a place where you can take shelter and rediscover yourself.



CHARMING SPOTS

SAN JUAN BEACH (SPAIN)



These are two favourite or charming spots. The photos are not taken covering the whole beach. In the picture with views of the sea, you can be sitting in the terrace reading, or chatting with the impression of having plenty of space and time ahead and without any feelings of panic or anxiety.

On the other hand, because the house is located by the sea, there is a beach where you can walk and have a swim every morning in the summertime. The picture of the residential area where the house stands is very pleasant too, as you can see the green areas from the bedrooms, which is very relaxing. And you can do several things because it is very nice to be surrounded by palm-trees and plants



CHARMING SPOTS

SEVILLE (SPAIN)



Seville is my city; that's where I found love and it's there that I married. I spent there the most beautiful moments during my youth and we travel back there whenever we can to see our friends and relatives.

Mornings are beautiful in the spring. Seville is full of orange trees which provide a special smell that I have never found anywhere else.

For me, Seville is its Santa Cruz quarter, María Luisa park, the river, the Triana quarter. My favourite place: Seville as a whole



CHARMING SPOTS

MAR MENOR MURCIA (SPAIN)



There is a place which has a great charm for me: the **Mar Menor** [Minor Sea]. It is located in the Murcia province, near the town of San Pedro del Pinatar, where I was born and spent part of my youth.

This sea is practically closed, like a lake, except for a connection with the Mediterranean Sea, in La Manga. Now it has a canal so that boats can go from one sea to the other and the old connection, the weirs, a shallow area where traditional craft fishing was practised; they made fences for the fish to go in and that fish was kept alive until the fishermen collected it.

The salinity of water in this sea is much higher than usual because of its great evaporation. This is so because the temperature is very high in summer due to its characteristics: being practically a lake and not very deep, less than 7 meters.

It is an ideal place for practising water sports and, of course, for swimming. Its high salinity makes it easier to float and, besides, it is good for bone-related problems.



CHARMING SPOTS



SAN JUAN BEACH ALICANTE (SPAIN)

For me, San Juan Beach in Alicante is a very special place that brings me many memories because it has been present in my life since my childhood.

For many years, it was the place where I used to spend the summer together with my family and where we established our place of residence.

Above all, I like this beach because it is very open and large, for its fine, light sand, and for its warm, calm and crystalline waters on those days when the sea looks like a millpond to me. Sitting down at the shore and watching the immensity of the sea and the length of its coastline and walking on it are things due to which this is a charming spot for me.



CHARMING SPOTS

LO PAGAN MURCIA (SPAIN)



One of my charming spots, the chosen one, lies on the border between the provinces of Alicante and Murcia, the first town in the Murcia region travelling along the coast southwards; we are speaking about San Pedro del Pinatar; taking that road, on the left, we can see *La Casa del Reloj* [The Clock House] (an eclectic building, after many debates, a definition which is not accepted by all experts in art) nowadays, it has become a (charming, tasteful) restaurant after its rehabilitation but it used to be the summer house of a marquis and marquess who lived in Murcia and had the privilege of putting up a very ill Mr Emilio Castelar for his possible recovery.

This place is linked to my life because that is where I was born and it keeps my maternal roots. I haven't lived there on a continuous basis, I left when I was four months old because my father was a civil guard, but I went there during my childhood, adolescence and youth for the summer holidays and on some other occasions. That was where my grandmother's house stood, a real privilege 50m away from the Mar Menor beach (my childhood friends envied me). For me, it is a beautiful place with the two seas (*Mediterráneo* and *Menor*); it is the end or the beginning of La Manga (depending on what direction you are taking); it has a Natural Park which receives birds, especially flamingos, every year; saltworks where people plaster themselves with the magical mud that relieves all the pains and a lake called Mar Menor, which is unique in my opinion. There are still unspoilt beaches, like La Llana on the Mediterranean, where having a swim or going for a walk is a good experience.



CHARMING SPOTS

SANTIAGO DE LA RIBERA MURCIA (SPAIN)



This place is very significant for me because that is where I spent my first summer holidays. My parents bought a holiday flat there in a residential area called '*Las Torres* [The Towers].'

Apart from making lots of friends and having my uncles, aunts and cousins there too, we enjoyed ourselves a lot at the spa of our the residential area. It is one of the biggest. It is still standing and in very good condition.



CHARMING SPOTS

- We can highlight the choice of the sea as the favourite spot by most workshop participants. Living in Alicante, a city by the sea, has had an enormous influence, to such an extent that it has become a reference place for most people.
- People who have had to change their place of residence during their life have chosen the place associated to their childhood as their favourite spot, regardless of whether it was at the seaside or in the mountains, a large or small town, etc. That place brings back to them feelings and life experiences from the past, smells that take them to other periods of their lives, emotional relationships and good memories that they miss as time goes by and geographical distance increases.
- Other people have chosen shelters or places which transmit peace to them or places associated with family gatherings during which family members of different ages meet to enjoy some time together.





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