

# Club Tour to the Algarve

Steve 'Lucky' Nash writes about Doc's 2011 Algarve Tour



Jeff, Pete, Doc, Phil and Malcolm

## Dream Roads

Do you ever dream of the perfect motorcycling road?

Having put the bike in the garage from another ride of the familiar, pot-holed and congested local roads, is there a moment when you allow your thoughts to drift to what could be?

What does your perfect road look like?

Is it an undulating, twisty, grippy feast of perfect

tarmac, featuring 298 bends in a 30 mile stretch; devoid of any traffic and with no junctions or speed restrictions? And is there a clear blue sky, the air warm and dry, fragrant with the perfume of the wild flowers that line the dream route?

Do you look up from this unbelievable road, which appears to be suspended from the mountain side, to catch stunning views across deep rocky valleys? And does the road sparkle from the myriad quartz jewels embedded in its surface reflecting the sun and holding your tyres to this perfect dream road.



Well dream no more because such a road exists and the lucky adventurers who signed up with Phil "Doc" Hacker for the 2011 Algarve FJ Club Tour have ridden such a road and what's more there are many others like it.

The tour consisted of an overnight crossing to Santander from Plymouth followed by 2 days riding across Spain to a quality villa near Loule (10 miles from Faro) in the Algarve. The bikes making up the tour was Doc's old FJ1100 (which he leaves at the villa) my 1999 VFR800, a Kawasaki Z750 and 3 FJR 1300's.

Using the villa as a base the tour experienced fantastic weather, empty roads and amazing scenery as we enjoyed the roads of the Algarve. Good food, good company and excellent accommodation all for just £530 excluding fuel and evening meals. Each day started out by popping to the Supermarket in the morning so we could put together a pack lunch. Then Doc would take us for a 160 mile tour around these amazing sun blessed roads.

The tours varied from the Monte Gordo mountain area with it's big reservoirs, to a run along the Spanish and Portugal boulder following the Guadiana river.

We rode to the heights of the Monichique Mountains (*the magic mountains to us*) and miles of glori-

ous roads in-between.

One day was offered as a rest day but some of us went to the temple to motor racing, the Portimao race circuit (*watching Doc on his ZX10 take on and pass Neil Hodgson*) which was only 40 miles away from the Villa.

During this time Doc freely took time to give us all tips and pointers to improve our cornering and riding styles and was a first rate group leader.

# Club Tour to the Algrave

It must be pointed out that the Tour members could pick their own pace so no one was intimidated into riding faster than they wanted to.

Every road was a delight to ride and it was a happy and contented bunch of club members who left for home after 7 days of the best riding they will probably ever experience. The ride home was equally eventful. Who will forget the Spanish road (N435) through the Sierra mountains with its 60 miles of wide, sweeping brand new road, apparently built for no other purpose but to allow motorcyclists to enjoy a nirvana like experience, and there is a coffee stop at the end!



change in the speed limit went through a speed trap. We were all waved to the verge where seemingly randomly 2 of the riders were picked out. One was told they had been doing 99kmh, the other 117kmh, in a 70kmh zone. The punishment was 50 euros and 150 euros fines. It felt

liked being mugged. If we wanted to argue the bikes would be impounded for 14 days whilst we waited the police reports – travellers beware - don't do more than 20% of any posted speed limit or argue with the Spanish police as they carry guns. There was a list of all

the motorists stopped and fined that day on the policeman's clip board – all UK number plates. Team spirit came to the fore and all chipped in for the fines. We made up for this low by having a great night out in Salamanca and riding back through the Picos mountains to Santander the next day – stunning.

Thanks to Doc and Lorinda for hosting the tour, you would be a fool to miss the next one. Check out You tube for the short tour video, search - FJ club Algarve tour 2011.



Lucky looking at the 160 daily mile route

