

Bill and Cathy McArthur in Spain: 3

We continue to work very hard in our Spanish classes and generally follow the routine that we've established. We decided to venture out of town on Saturday. To make it as simple as possible, we decided to take a bus down the Costa del Sol a bit to Torremolinos and Fuengirola. On Friday night we walked into central Malaga to check out the bus schedules, so we knew that there were quite a number of buses running back and forth on this "suburban" run. It was in the 40s as we started out, so we had sweaters and raincoats on. As the day progressed, the layers came off and then eventually came back on.

The Costa del Sol lived up to its name as a hot sun shone all day out of a deep blue sky. The Mediterranean looked very blue and inviting. The two towns we visited are heavily used by the huge influx of tourists that come to the Costa del Sol from all over Europe. Many signs were in English, German, and French, in addition to being in Spanish. There were English pubs, Chinese Restaurants, Irish Pubs, and American joints all over the place. A featured breakfast item seemed to be coffee and brandy for about \$1.90.

As the day wore on, more and more people were seen wearing shorts and tank tops. Cathy spotted a topless woman with a thong sunning herself, but we couldn't get a good photo. We found Torremolinos a bit too much. It was like an Ocean City, Maryland compared to Fuengirola being like Myrtle Beach. The hot sun brought the temperature up to at least 75, but when we ducked back into a shaded side street, the temperature dropped at least 20 degrees. There were many power boats and sailboats tooling around and we even saw a jet-ski being annoying.

At the east end of town, we found a castle, Castillo de Sohail, up on a hill near the beach. We took a tour and found that it was on a very ancient site. Bill climbed up an incredibly claustrophobic stairwell to the top of one of the towers in order to get the best view.

We found even our simple trip to be challenging, but we muddled through. Our next trip to Cadiz, the oldest city in Europe, will be a much greater challenge.