

Avocado farm Finca Los Jarales at Casarabonelo, 60k South East of Ronda

This 2 hectares farm was constructed by the father of Cristobal Miguel some 40 years ago.

Casarabonelo is a small town in the mountains of the Sierra Nieves range. It sits 1000 metres above sea level and the valley in which the farm nestles faces out towards the sea. They never get any frost and it is indeed a micro-climate. They have cooler summer night temperatures and none of the scorching heat of the coast plain of Malaga province. This weather creates a phenomenon in that the trees flower all the time thus producing fresh fruits continuously. Therefore they can start harvesting Bacon avocados in mid-September, Fuerte from October to end November and Hass from December until August. There were even some Hass still on the trees in September. In perfect condition but on branches too far out and too dangerous to harvest....

The terracing was carved out of and into the valley's walls. Each terrace is 1.5-2 metres high and 4-6 metres deep. There are 2 hectares of avocados on this farm and another 10 hectares at lower altitude on the plain below.

They only commercially grow avocados on this farm. Anything else is for domestic consumption only; apples, grape, pomegranates, quinces and various vegetables.

At Los Jarales on the floor of the terraces are a deep pile carpet of leaves that fall throughout the year. The fruits only grow on the tops and the outside canopy of the trees. The farm workers are continuously cutting and pruning the trees to stop the trees getting too tall and wide to harvest the fruit from. The main trunks are cut out and whenever this is done side shoots come out creating new branches, Similar to Pollarding willows and cobnuts. To harvest the fruits they use extendable poles with cutters on the end. The fruits fall to the ground undamaged as they are cushioned by the carpet of leaves below.

There are 2 natural springs on the farm. The water is coming deep out of the granite and limestone Mountain. Some reservoirs have been cut into the rock and the water is so clear that you can see small frogs scurrying to the bottom as they become aware of our approach. The water is pure and cool, a delight to drink on a hot September day.

What a pleasure it was to feel and share their pride in this extraordinary location, knowing that we can contribute by giving this farm the financial reward for the efforts of 40 years ago and the hard work in maintaining this legacy.

*Andrew Poulton
Managing Director*



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